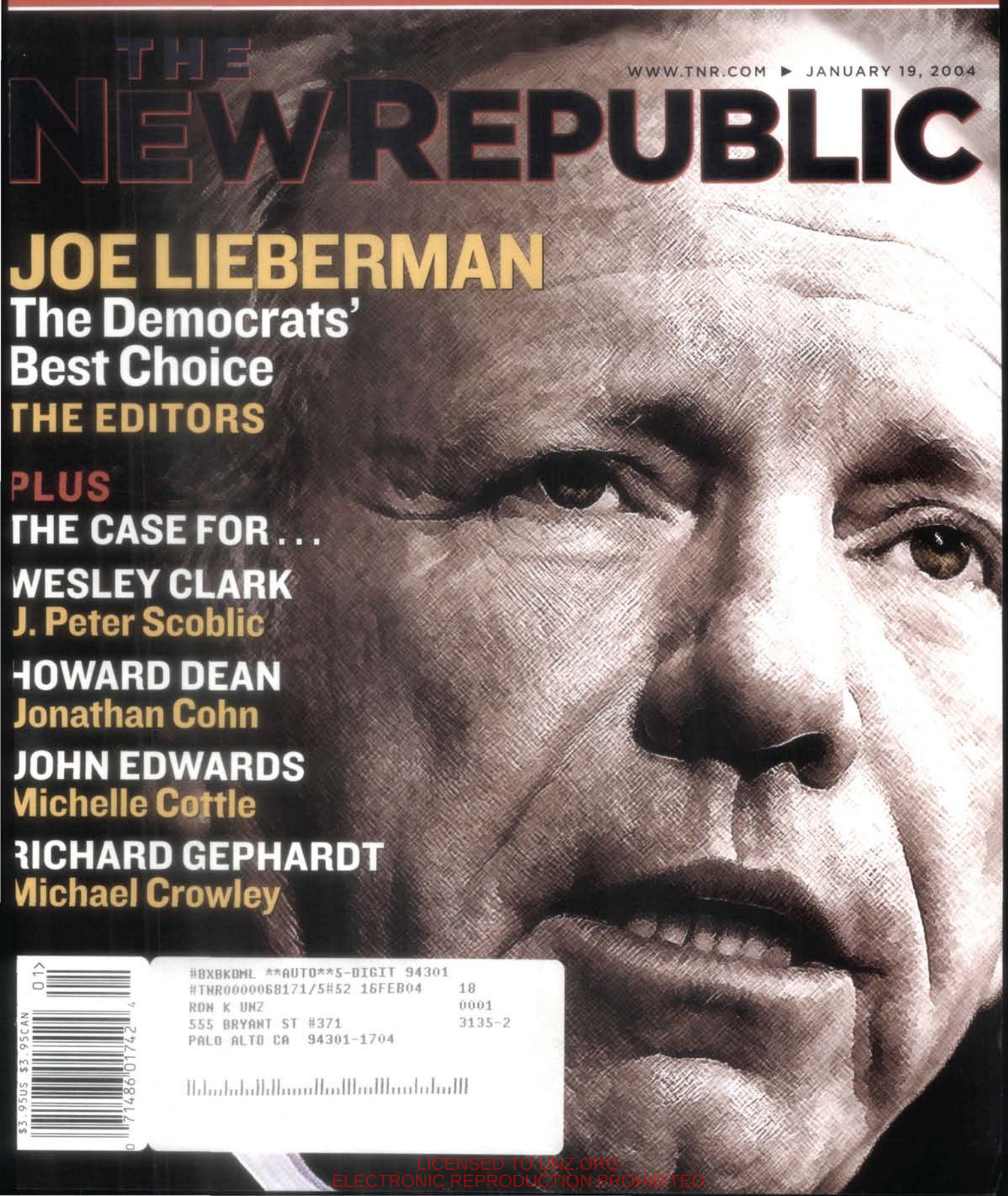
Special Endorsement Issue



WWW.TNR.COM ▶ JANUARY 19, 2004

THE NEW REPUBLIC

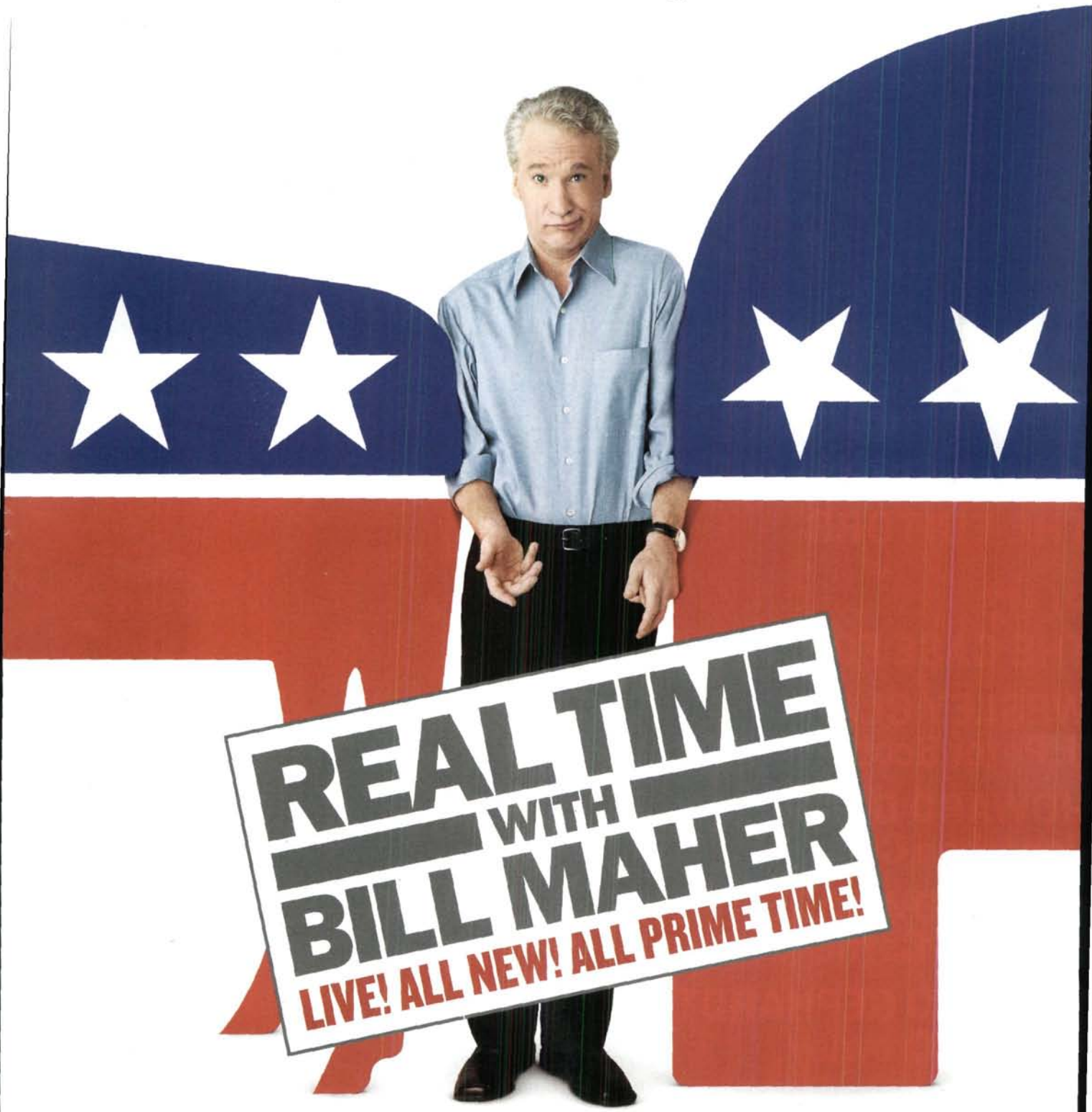
JOE LIEBERMAN
The Democrats' Best Choice
THE EDITORS

PLUS
THE CASE FOR . . .
WESLEY CLARK
J. Peter Scoblic
HOWARD DEAN
Jonathan Cohn
JOHN EDWARDS
Michelle Cottle
RICHARD GEPHARDT
Michael Crowley

$3.95US $3.95CAN 01>
0 71486 01742 4
#BXBKDML **AUTO**5-DIGIT 94301
#TNR00000068171/5#52 16FEB04 18
RON K UNZ 0001
555 BRYANT ST #371 3135-2
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Deeply embedded journalism.



FRIDAYS AT 8PM/7C
PREMIERES JAN. 16

HBO®

ENCORE PLAYS
AT 11:30PM/10:30C

© MMVI Home Box Office, Inc. All rights reserved. ® Service mark of Home Box Office, Inc. Tape delayed on the West Coast.

BRAD GREY TELEVISION

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
MARTIN PERETZ

EDITOR Peter Beinart
LITERARY EDITOR Leon Wieseltier
EXECUTIVE EDITOR Christopher Orr
MANAGING EDITOR J. Peter Scoblic
FOREIGN EDITOR Joshua Kurlantzick
SENIOR EDITORS
Jonathan Chait, Jonathan Cohn, Michelle Cottle, Gregg Easterbrook, Ruth Franklin, John B. Judis, Lawrence F. Kaplan, Andrew Sullivan, James Wood
LEGAL AFFAIRS Jeffrey Rosen
ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR
Sacha Zimmerman
TNR ONLINE
Richard Just, Editor
Christiane Culhane
FILMS Stanley Kauffmann
THEATER Robert Brustein
ART Jed Perl
MUSIC David Hajdu
ARCHITECTURE Martin Filler
DANCE Jennifer Homans
TELEVISION Lee Siegel
POETRY EDITOR Glyn Maxwell
NEW REPUBLIC BOOKS (Basic Books)
Chip Rossetti
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Fouad Ajami, Akhil Reed Amar, David A. Bell, Peter Berkowitz, Paul Berman, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Nathan Glazer, Anthony Grafton, David Grann, Yossi Klein Halevi, Ann Hulbert, Robert Kagan, Michael Kinsley, Charles Krauthammer, Jeremy McCarter, John McWhorter, Sherwin B. Nuland, David Rieff, Maggie Scarf, Ronald Steel, Cass R. Sunstein, Margaret Talbot, Alan Taylor, E.V. Thaw, Helen Vendler, Michael Walzer, Sean Wilentz, Alan Wolfe, Robert Wright
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS
Jack Coughlin, David Cowles, Vint Lawrence, David Schorr
ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Michael Crowley, Franklin Foer, Ryan Lizza, Noam Scheiber, Jason Zengerle
ART/DESIGN DIRECTION
Joe Heroun, Christine Car/H2C Media
EDITORIAL-CORPORATE COORDINATOR
Laura E. Obolensky
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR AND INFORMATION-TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR
Bruce Steinke
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Henry Riggs
ASSISTANT EDITORS
Spencer Ackerman, Kara Baskin, Clay Risen
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR
Adam B. Kushner
LITERARY ASSISTANT
Deborah Friedell
ASSISTANT POETRY EDITOR
Melanie Rehak
REPORTER-RESEARCHERS
Josh Benson, Anne O'Donnell

PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER
Stephanie Sandberg
GENERAL MANAGER Robin Prausa
CONSUMER MARKETING DIRECTOR
Peter Glovin
ONLINE BUSINESS DIRECTOR Ari Gersen
ONLINE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
David Hertog

ADVERTISING SALES & MARKETING
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER Richard Parker
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING, WEST
Joan Stapleton Tooley
ACCOUNT MANAGERS
Joseph Carden, Julie Sturmak
BUSINESS ASSISTANT Ranee Jaber
MARKETING COORDINATOR/RESEARCHER
Kate Genser

TNR/ON SYMPOSIA ON PUBLIC POLICY
Sally Aman, Cheryl O'Donnell

MEDIA OUTREACH
Terese Schlachter

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION
ACCOUNTING MANAGER Debra Sotelo
ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT Vanessa Wilson
BUSINESS ASSISTANT Mandy Hansen

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ROGER HERTOG, Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ
MICHAEL STEINHARDT

THE NEW REPUBLIC
Updated daily. On the Web at www.tnr.com.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A JOURNAL OF POLITICS AND THE ARTS

JANUARY 19, 2004 WASHINGTON, D.C. ISSUE 4,644 VOLUME 230

COVER STORY: SPECIAL ENDORSEMENT ISSUE

The Editors **8** **Our Choice** For Joe Lieberman and a renewed Democratic Party.

Michelle Cottle **12** **The Wonk** The case for John Edwards.

Michael Crowley **14** **Old Faithful** The case for Richard Gephardt.

J. Peter Scoblic **17** **Credible Threat** The case for Wesley Clark.

Jonathan Cohn **20** **Moral Center** The case for Howard Dean.

POLITICS & THE WORLD

4 **CORRESPONDENCE**
Is George W. Bush for real on Arab democracy? &c.

Peter Beinart **6** **TRB | Unholy Alliance** If the Islamists are trying to kill Pervez Musharraf, why is he still supporting them?

10 **NOTEBOOK** Howard Dean's religion problem (continued), &c.

Ryan Lizza **23** **Campaign Journal: The Puzzle** It's Howard Dean's teenagers versus Dick Gephardt's Teamsters as everyone tries to answer one baffling question: How do the Iowa caucuses actually work?

Martin Peretz **42** **CAMBRIDGE DIARIST | Tremors**

BOOKS & THE ARTS

Stanley Kauffmann **28** **FILMS | An Odyssey** *Cold Mountain* gets the little details right, but sorely misses the big ones.

Joseph Frank **29** **Liberties** *Pushkin: A Biography* by T. J. Binyon

Justin Driver **34** **Dream Weaver** *Her Dream of Dreams: The Rise and Triumph of Madam C. J. Walker* by Beverly Lowry

Robert Boyers **37** **In Exile From Exile** *The Hooligan's Return: A Memoir* by Norman Manea

Henry Shukman **41** **POEM** | *Storm Lines*

COVER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY *Joe Heroun*; IMAGE BY *Landov*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

SAFETY FIRST

ERIC UMANSKY DOES NOT PROVIDE a complete analysis of the issue facing Beverly Hills High School ("Toxic," November 24, 2003). We are not participants in the lawsuits, but we have concerns about the environmental conditions facing the school. Venoco Inc. operates an industrial oil and gas facility on the campus that the state of California would not likely allow at any new campus. Although Venoco apparently won an award from state regulators, we question its significance given that Venoco has received multiple violations this year during the South Coast Air Quality Management District's physical inspections (SCAQMD).

SCAQMD's public documents state that these violations involved poor maintenance and could have been prevented. SCAQMD cites weathering, rust, corrosion, cracking, and multiple openings that allowed volatile organic-compound emissions just feet from where our children practice sports. Many parents and experts remain unconvinced that the necessary cumulative health-risk assessments or meaningful epidemiological studies have been adequately conducted.

If this case settles, which Umansky points out has occurred in similar cases, we will be left without knowing the scientific facts. Our children and community will be left with an industrial facility inappropriately located on our school campus, operated by an oil company that has not proved trustworthy. Common sense would tell us that our children deserve better.

JODY KLEINMAN
JEFF KLEINMAN
Beverly Hills, California

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

IN AN EDITORIAL APTLY TITLED "Crusade," THE NEW REPUBLIC endorsed President Bush's "idealist" call for the expansion of democracy to those parts of the world now denied it, especially the lands of the Arab Middle East (November 24, 2003). This is certainly a moral vision. But the argument that this vision can also be the basis of a practical foreign policy remains unconvincing.

It is neither "world weariness" nor "cultural condescension" to note that there are few signs of a democratic renewal among the peoples of the Arab Middle East. The critical issue is not what sort of democratic self-government these peoples are capable of some time in the indefinite future but rather what is possible now or in the near term. All observers conclude that, at present, the political dialogue in these countries is dominated by conspiracy theories, hatred of Westerners, and a tradition of political violence. There does not appear to be a will on the part of any significant Arab populace or elite in favor of democracy. Certainly there are few who are willing to fight for it.

ALVIN ROSENTHAL
Kalamazoo, Michigan

THE ENTHUSIASM WITH WHICH THE editors of TNR greeted President Bush's proclamation of America's world-democratizing mission seems more than a bit credulous. Not only does the president's speech reek of post-facto justification for the war on Iraq; it reflects the same opportunistic use of

Iowa and New Hampshire:
Let us take you there

January 12–19 Iowa Caucus—LIVE
- Jan. 19: Two caucuses live on C-SPAN and C-SPAN2 starting at 7:30 pm ET
- *Washington Journal* and campaign events daily

2004 VOTE

January 20–27 New Hampshire Primary—LIVE
- Jan. 27: Simulcast of WMUR's primary night coverage & results
- Jan. 27: First-in-the-nation voting live from Dixville Notch
- *Washington Journal* and campaign events daily

Don't miss the All Politics Weekend, January 16–18.

C-SPAN
For 25 Years, the Political Network of Record.
Created by Cable. Offered as a Public Service. c-span.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

democracy promotion made by past administrations, Democratic as well as Republican: as a club with which to beat our enemies. President Bush has harsh criticism for the oppressiveness of Cuba and North Korea but only kind words for the very modest liberalizing steps taken by our authoritarian friends in the Middle East. Bush makes no mention of the assortment of unsavory regimes that his administration has embraced in its war on terrorism. And Bush makes no attempt to reconcile his passion for democracy with the administration's over-hasty welcome for the abortive coup in Venezuela. The architects of this administration's foreign policies have never distinguished themselves with their disinterested commitment to the promotion of democracy or human rights. TNR imagines that the president's speech must have provoked great unease among the Middle East's tyrants. That assumes that they take Bush's rhetoric as seriously as TNR's editors do.

ANTHONY F. GRECO
New York, New York

LOST LEADER

PETER BEINART ARGUES IN TRB that the nomination of Howard Dean would stoke the culture wars, especially with respect to gay marriage ("Southern Man," November 24, 2003). Although he asserts that the establishment of gay marriage would be a moral triumph, he is afraid that "politically, it is an impending disaster for Democrats, especially in the South." He complains that Democrats refuse to learn the lesson taught by Bill Clinton: that "victory requires real ideological sacrifice."

The analysis fundamentally misunderstands the real political lesson of the Clinton years, which were a catastrophe for the Democratic Party. The Democrats lost the House, the Senate, important governorships, state legislatures, suffered an impeachment trial, and lost the White House in 2000. They managed to do this during an era of peace and prosperity. Moreover, for all his famed "political skills," Clinton only got about 49 percent of the vote during his 1996 presidential reelection bid. Republicans subsequently went on to pick up seats in the House and regain control of the Senate during the 2002 off-year elections. In 2003, they recalled the Democratic governor of California, won the replacement election, and won the governorships of Kentucky and Mississippi. Furthermore, younger voters are now more likely to identify themselves as Republicans than as Democrats. The Republican Party is on the verge of operationally becoming the nation's governing political party.

The political lesson is that leadership matters. Whatever one thinks of Dean's policy proposals, there is little doubt about where he stands. On fundamental public policy questions, ideological stealth or "sacrifice" is an affront to liberal democratic values and a formula for long-term electoral failure.

JOE BENNING
Via the Internet

THE NEW REPUBLIC (ISSN 0028-6583). Vol. 230, Number 1, Issue 4,644. January 19, 2004. (Printed in the United States on January 8, 2004.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated April 12 & 19, June 7 & 14, July 5 & 12, August 16 & 23, September 13 & 20, November 29 & December 6, and December 27, 2004 through January 10, 2005) at 1331 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. Telephone (202) 508-4444. For advertising inquiries, please contact Mandy Hansen at (202) 508-4444 or our NY sales office at (212) 465-8447. Yearly subscriptions, $79.97; foreign, $119.97 (U.S. funds); Canada, $99.97 (U.S. funds). Back issues, $8.00 domestic and $10.00 foreign/Canada (includes postage & handling).
© 2003 by The New Republic, LLC.
Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Rights and permissions: fax (202) 628-9383. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. For hard copy reprints, call (202) 508-4444. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, and CD-ROM are available through ProQuest, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone (800) 521-0600. Postmaster: Send changes of address to The New Republic, P.O. Box 37298, Boone, IA 50037-0298. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (e-mail address: letters@tnr.com). For subscription inquiries or problems call (800) 827-1289 or visit our website at www.thenewrepublic.com.

edm THE EMERGING DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY
THE ELECTRONIC STRATEGY CENTER FOR BUILDING THE NEW MAJORITY

By the end of this decade, demographic groups that generally support Democrats will provide the basis for a broad electoral majority. But the Democrats cannot convert this growing electoral base into an election-winning coalition until they overcome the deep split within the party.

Ruy Teixeira

Today, competition between the presidential candidates has reinforced the party's underlying divisions between its populist and centrist wings. But, among ordinary rank and file Democrats the most significant difference in perspective actually stems from the practical differences between issue-oriented activists and professional political campaign workers. They have different goals, but when these two groups meet in a political campaign they find their needs and objectives overlap. **On basic Democratic principles and values, far more unites them than divides them.**

Today Democrats have a profound moral and social obligation to seek unity. Democratic divisions have allowed Republicans to embrace an ideological extremism and "win at any cost" mentality that threatens not only the Democrats as a political party but many basic American values and institutions.

What is urgently needed is a dialogue among Democrats to establish minimum standards of mutual respect and cooperation between the various sectors of the party. Beyond this Democrats need a new approach to political strategy, one based on the hard facts about public opinion and the belief that centrist strategies for winning majorities can be combined with progressive goals and ideals.

The Emerging Democratic Majority website and e-newsletter has been created as a meeting ground where rank and file Democrats who share this perspective can find resources and strategic analysis for building a new Democratic majority. I invite you to visit the site and subscribe to the EDM newsletter today.

www.EmergingDemocraticMajority.com

THE EDM WEBSITE & E-NEWSLETTER

Political Commentary by Ruy Teixeira
Political analysis in a daily weblog, ***Donkey Rising***, plus two weekly columns, ***Public Opinion Watch*** and ***Political Strategy Watch***.

Dialogue Among Dems
A meeting ground for centrists and populists featuring online conferences with leading political analysts.

The Strategy Center
Resources for building the new majority including a political strategy library of key articles, commentary and data.

VISIT AND SUBSCRIBE TODAY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Unholy Alliance

TRB FROM WASHINGTON

AMERICANS ONLY NOTICE Pakistan when it's about to blow up. And, on December 25, it almost did: Two vans loaded with explosives tried to slam into President Pervez Musharraf's car. It was the second attempt on his life in eleven days. The U.S. media portrayed the attempted assassinations as escalations in the death struggle between the pro-Western president and his Islamist enemies.

But, had the press glanced Pakistan's way just a week later, it might have realized that this familiar narrative is too simple—and too comforting. On December 29, Pakistani legislators passed a bill extending Musharraf's near-absolute powers until 2007. Outside parliament, secular legislators protested the pre-scripted vote, chanting, "Go, Musharraf, go." But, inside, Pakistan's Islamist parties—abiding by a deal they had cut several days before—guaranteed that Musharraf's dictatorship would continue for years to come.

If that sounds like a strange way for mortal enemies to behave, it's because, while Pakistan's Islamist militants may be trying to kill Musharraf, they are also his key allies in retaining power. Since September 11, 2001, Americans have begun to notice the similarly macabre double game in Riyadh, where the Saudi royals—seeking religious legitimacy—feed the very Islamist fanatics who want to dangle them from the nearest lamppost. But there is far less recognition, particularly on the right, that our good friend Musharraf is doing the same thing. In fact, in his case, it may be worse. First, because, unlike Saudi Arabia, Pakistan has a secular political tradition; Islamists aren't the only alternative to Musharraf's rule. Second, because Pakistan has nuclear weapons. All of which raises an interesting question: If the Bush administration is so committed to democracy in the Muslim world, why don't they fight for it in Pakistan, where we may need it most?

The military-mullah alliance has deep roots in Pakistani politics. After taking power in a 1977 coup, General Zia ul-Haq forged ties with radical clerics to legitimize his rule. He introduced public hangings and amputations, amended the blasphemy law to impose the death penalty for those who insulted the Prophet Mohammed, and encouraged Islamists to open *madrassa*s around the country—even granting their graduation certificates the status of an M.A. in Islamic sciences. The United States, which needed Zia's help against the Soviets in Afghanistan, shoveled him money nonetheless, some of which he in turn passed to Afghan warlords like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar—who made his name splashing acid in the faces of unveiled Afghan women and is now fighting to return the Taliban to power.

When Musharraf pulled off his own coup in 1999, he embarked on a similar strategy. The main threats to his rule were the two secular leaders who had dominated Pakistan's corrupt but relatively free politics in the '90s: Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister Musharraf deposed, and Benazir Bhutto, the prime minister before him. Musharraf jailed then exiled Sharif, blocked Bhutto's return, and disbanded parliament.

In 2002, Musharraf began a series of pseudodemocratic moves designed to legitimize his rule. In April 2002, he staged a plebiscite on extending his term for five years, which he won with 98 percent of the vote. Three months earlier, under pressure from the United States, the general had arrested more than 2,000 militants. But, near the time of the referendum, most were quietly let go. According to government sources, the releases were aimed at soothing Islamist opposition to the referendum. Sharif, by contrast, remained in exile.

That October, when Musharraf held elections for a reconstituted parliament, his alliance with the Islamists grew more explicit. The general allowed only college graduates to stand for office, which eliminated roughly 40 percent of possible candidates. But, in the tradition of Zia, he counted *madrassa* certificates as college degrees, allowing the Islamist parties to run their own candidates in place of the disqualified secularists. The results were stunning: The Islamists, who had never before won even 5 percent of the vote, won 11 percent and gained control of the parliament in the Northwest Frontier Province, which borders Afghanistan. As Carnegie Endowment visiting scholar Husain Haqqani wrote at the time, "Limitations imposed on the secular parties by Gen. Musharraf have created a political vacuum that is currently being filled by the Islamists." The European Union denounced the balloting as "seriously flawed." The Bush administration, however, called it "an important milestone in Pakistan's ongoing transition to democracy."

Six months after taking power, the religious parties in the Northwest Frontier Province voted to force women to wear veils, to ban male doctors from seeing female patients in government hospitals, and to establish a Taliban-style religious police. Musharraf blocked the measures just before a July 2003 trip to Camp David, where President Bush unveiled a $3 billion U.S. aid package. But the religious parties also began using their new power to assist Taliban rebels across the border. And, while Musharraf has pledged to crack down on such support, his latest political deal with the Islamists—ratified last week—once again calls his crackdowns into question. As Pakistani military expert Hassan Askar Rizvi puts it, "Musharraf cannot pursue a counterterrorism policy at home when many of the religious parties are in favor of Al Qaeda and his foreign policy goals are unachievable because the mullahs don't want them."

Musharraf's willingness to keep bolstering Islamists, even as they try to kill him, may seem baffling. But the logic is simple: If Musharraf turns to the secular parties instead, they will demand that he restore democracy. And, for the general, staying in power is more important than defeating terrorism.

Is the Bush administration really surprised? After all, underlying the president's grand speeches about Middle Eastern democracy is a recognition that dictators will do whatever it takes to retain power—including mortgaging their countries to fanatics. The answer to this ticking bomb, the president says, is for the United States to start conditioning our support on clear moves toward democracy. It's a great new policy. Too bad it doesn't apply to Pakistan. **PETER BEINART**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Discover a Mathematical World of Startling Beauty and Insight...

...when you experience *The Joy of Thinking: The Beauty and Power of Classical Mathematical Ideas*—in 24 fascinating and provocative video lectures

Lovers of mathematics have always shared a secret largely unknown to the rest of us: the subject they adore—for those granted a look beneath its surface—is *beautiful.*

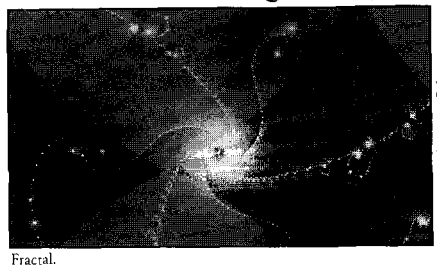
Its shapes and proportions inspire painters and musicians. Its mysteries can tantalize and confound even its own deepest theoreticians. And its demands for bold and insightful habits of thinking develop skills as useful to us in our everyday lives as they are to the most abstract philosophers.

And now the highly effective strategies of thinking from this remarkable mathematical world are available to you in **The Joy of Thinking: The Beauty and Power of Classical Mathematical Ideas**, in 24 clear and entertaining video lectures.

Best of all, the lectures come to you from The Teaching Company, the renowned educational enterprise that makes America's most honored college professors available in brilliant recorded lectures you can enjoy again and again.

No Special Knowledge Required!

The Joy of Thinking requires no specialized or advanced knowledge of math, and is as appropriate for high school students as for adults. Designed both for those already fascinated with math and eager to learn more, and those merely curious about the subject, the lectures feature two of the most entertaining and honored teachers in mathematics today: Professor Edward B. Burger of Williams College and Professor Michael Starbird of The University of Texas at Austin.



© Corel Stock Photo Library.

Fractal.

With the help of hundreds of props, graphics, computer animations, and delightfully light-hearted problems (the reason this course is available only on videotape and DVD), they examine the ways in which mathematicians make sense of our world through numbers, geometry, and probability. And they'll leave you with a firm grasp of math's most fundamental ideas, lessons for living, and a new appreciation for the mathematics—in art, nature, and everyday life—that surround us.

THE TEACHING COMPANY®
The Joy of Lifelong Learning Every Day
GREAT TEACHERS, GREAT COURSES, GREAT VALUE GUARANTEED.

Lecture Titles

1. Great Ideas that Bring Our World into Focus
2. How Many? Counting Surprises
3. Fermat's Last Theorem and the Allure of Number
4. Pining for Nature's Numbers
5. Sizing up the Fibonacci Numbers
6. The Sexiest Rectangle
7. The Hidden Beauty of the Golden Rectangle
8. The Pythagorean Theorem and Geometry of Ellipses
9. Not-so-Platonic Relationships in Platonic Solids
10. Hunting for a Sixth Platonic Solid
11. Is There a Fourth Dimension? Can We See It?
12. The Invisible Art of the Fourth Dimension
13. A Twisted Idea—The Möbius Band
14. A One-Sided, Sealed Surface—The Klein Bottle
15. Ordinary Origami—Creating Beautiful Patterns
16. Unfolding Paper to Reveal a Fiery Fractal
17. Fractals—Infinitely Complex Creations
18. Fractal Frauds of Nature
19. Chance Surprises—Measuring Uncertainty
20. Door Number Two or Door Number Three?
21. Great Expectations—Weighing the Uncertain Future
22. Random Thoughts—Randomness in Our World
23. How Surprising are Surprising Coincidences?
24. Life Lessons Learned from Mathematical Thinking

SAVE UP TO $185!
OFFER GOOD UNTIL FEB. 12, 2004

About The Teaching Company:

We review hundreds of top-rated professors from America's best colleges and universities each year. From this extraordinary group, we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% of these world-class scholar-teachers are selected to make The Great Courses. We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 1,800 hours of material in modern and ancient history, philosophy, literature, fine arts, the sciences, and mathematics for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is ever less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another or we will refund your money promptly.

To order, mail or fax coupon below. Or call our toll-free number: (Please refer to Priority Code 15947)

1-800-TEACH-12 (1-800-832-2412) Fax: 703-378-3819 www.TEACH12.com/nrep

THE Great Courses™
THE TEACHING COMPANY®
4151 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100
Chantilly, VA 20151-1232

Priority Code 15947

Please send me **The Joy of Thinking: The Beauty and Power of Classical Mathematical Ideas**, which consists of twenty-four 30-minute lectures (12 hours in all), with complete lecture outlines.

- ❑ **DVD $69.95** (reg. price $254.95) **SAVE $185!** plus $15 shipping, handling, and lifetime satisfaction guarantee.
- ❑ **Videotape $54.95** (reg. price $199.95) **SAVE $145!** plus $10 shipping, handling, and lifetime satisfaction guarantee.

**Non-U.S. Orders: Additional shipping charges apply. Call or visit the FAQs page at www.TEACH12.com for details.*
***Virginia residents please add 4.5% sales tax.*

❑ **Check or Money Order enclosed**

❑ **Charge my:**

❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover ❑ American Express

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE *(If we have questions regarding your order)* _____

❑ **FREE CATALOG.** Please send me a free copy of your current catalog (no purchase necessary).

Offer Good Through: February 12, 2004

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Choice

RECALL FOR A moment the political climate in the United States in January 2001. Ralph Nader and the Supreme Court had made George W. Bush president, but he had lost the popular vote, and his party had lost seats in the House and Senate. The campaign had been fought largely on Democratic terrain—with Bush promising a larger federal role in education and health care, and a multicultural Republican Party. With national security a second-tier political issue, and welfare and crime no longer political issues at all, all that remained of Ronald Reagan's winning formula was tax cuts. And even that had been challenged by John McCain in the primary. With Latinos, professionals, and other growing constituencies trending Democratic, Bush's victory appeared to many like a fluke in a country heading the other way.

If Reagan's formula looked increasingly obsolete, Bill Clinton's seemed alive and well. The nomination of Al Gore and Joe Lieberman had seemed to secure the New Democratic legacy. Foreign policy hawkishness, free trade, and fiscal discipline—once heresies in the party—were now mainstream. Indeed, the dominant Democratic response to Gore and Lieberman's loss was to chastise them for not running more explicitly on Clinton's record. When THE NEW REPUBLIC endorsed Gore in the 2000 Democratic primary, the editors wrote that, "[a]s the Clinton administration draws to a close, it leaves a Democratic Party cleansed of many of the habits that long alienated it from average Americans and from its own best traditions."

If only those words were still true today. The years since January 2001 have been among the worst in the contemporary history of the Democratic Party. To be sure, the party has suffered from events beyond its control. Since September 11, 2001, George W. Bush has ruthlessly turned the country's fear and rage into a wedge issue, sacrificing national unity but recreating the visceral flag-politics of the 1980s. But the Democratic Party has also buried itself. In late 2002, with the Bush administration threatening preemptive war in Iraq, Democratic strategists developed a remarkable plan for the midterm elections: Ignore national security. One year after the bloodiest foreign attack on U.S. soil, and on the eve of one of the most audacious foreign policy gambles in U.S. history, Democratic candidates campaigned on the sluggish economy and prescription drugs. And Bush and Karl Rove ripped them to shreds.

From that humiliation, the Howard Dean revolt was born. In early 2003, the former Vermont governor began captivating the Democratic base with his thunderous attacks on Washington Democrats. But, in their righteousness, Dean and his supporters have embraced an analysis potentially even more damaging than that of the party leaders they seek to depose. We are not speaking primarily about Dean's general-election prospects (though they are grim, and their potential consequences for the House and Senate even grimmer). The problem with Dean's vision of the Democratic Party is more than electoral; it is intellectual and moral. And the candidate who offers the clearest, bravest alternative is Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman.

Fundamentally, the Dean campaign equates Democratic support for the Iraq war with appeasement of President Bush. But the fight against Saddam Hussein falls within a hawkish-liberal tradition that stretches through the Balkan wars, the Gulf war, and, indeed, the cold war itself. Lieberman is not the only candidate who stands in that tradition—Wesley Clark promoted it courageously in Kosovo, as did Richard Gephardt when he defied the polls to vote for $87 billion to rebuild Iraq. But Lieberman is its most steadfast advocate, not only in the current field but in the entire Democratic Party. In 1991, he broke with every other Northern Democrat in the Senate to support the Gulf war, then broke with George H.W. Bush when the former president allowed Saddam to slaughter tens of thousands of Iraqi Shia in the war's aftermath. In 1998, Lieberman joined with McCain to co-sponsor the Iraq Liberation Act, which committed the United States to regime change in Baghdad. And, in the 2000 campaign, when the younger Bush was still peddling neo-isolationism, it was Gore and Lieberman who insisted that the United States be prepared to use force to stop genocide and promote democracy.

By deriding Democratic support for overthrowing Saddam as "Bush Lite," Dean threatens to define that tradition out of the Democratic Party. Reasonable people, including reasonable hawks, can differ about the wisdom of the Iraq war, especially given the apparent absence of an ongoing Iraqi nuclear program. But the nature of Dean's opposition suggests an old Democratic affliction: an excessive faith in multilateralism and an insufficient faith in the moral potential of U.S. power.

Dean is rightly passionate about the harm done to America's relations with its allies. Bush, he says, continues to "rub their nose in humiliation." But he can muster no similar passion about Iraq's freedom from one of the great

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

monsters of the twentieth century. Saddam's overthrow leaves him cold; he "suppose[d]" it was a good thing. Dean and his supporters identify viscerally with the foreign governments that resent being bullied by Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. Yet they identify barely at all with the largely voiceless people—in countries like Syria and Iran—who might consider a democracy's projection of power into the heart of a region defined by tyranny to be progressive, even inspiring.

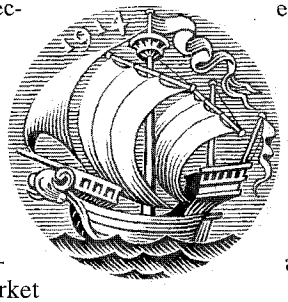
All this raises questions about what a President Dean would have done when America's European allies bitterly resisted the Clinton administration's efforts to help Bosnia defend itself. Today, even more than then, global anxiety about America's overwhelming power means it is likely that any significant U.S. military intervention short of an Afghanistan-style response to direct attack will provoke hostility in Europe and on the American left. A Democratic president may have to defy both America's allies and his domestic political base to aggressively fight terrorism and defend freedom. So far, at least, Dean's record on the national stage suggests he doesn't understand that.

Lieberman does. It is not just that he voted for the war and for the $87 billion for postwar reconstruction. The clearest—and least popular—truth about the Iraq occupation is that we don't have enough troops to secure the country. And, in the short term at least, we can't get them from other countries or by reconstituting the Iraqi army. All the major Democratic candidates say the United States must win the peace in Iraq. Yet only Lieberman has put that goal above his political self-interest—and repeatedly called for more American troops.

Most Democratic strategists seem to view Lieberman's brave, consistent foreign policy record as less valuable against Bush than the military experience of John Kerry or Wesley Clark. But the assumption that the Democratic Party can make itself credible on defense through the personal heroism of its leaders trivializes its problem—much as the Republican Party does when it finds black and Hispanic spokesmen to sell its urban policies. The Democrats' national security problem stems from the public perception that its leaders lack a clear, aggressive strategy for defending the country at a dangerous time. Neither Kerry nor Clark—who have taken contradictory positions on the war in Iraq and opportunistically opposed the $87 billion for Iraqi reconstruction—have addressed this crisis of ideas. Lieberman has.

On domestic policy, Lieberman has his failings. His infatuation with Silicon Valley has sometimes blinded him to the necessity of tough, fair government regulation of the financial markets, especially on the expensing of stock options. But, unlike some of his fellow Senate "moderates," Lieberman's overall economic record is progressive and responsible. He voted for Clinton's 1993 budget and against both Bush tax cuts. He would repeal the upper-income portions of Bush's tax cuts, a position consistent with his long-standing belief that the Democratic Party should cut taxes for the middle class. In 1991, Lieberman told *The New York Times* that Democrats must "understand that middle-class people are breaking their backs so they and their kids can live better, and it is our responsibility to make that happen and not just to keep taking from them." That is the kind of language that helped elect Clinton and that Democrats need to recapture today.

Where Lieberman diverges most from his competitors on domestic policy is in his willingness to challenge entrenched party interest groups. Many liberal intellectuals privately fret about the teachers' unions' stranglehold on Democratic education policy. But Lieberman is one of the few national Democrats to challenge them. He supports experimenting with school vouchers, not because of free-market theology but because of neoliberal empiricism: He wants to see if they work. And his educational heresies extend beyond school choice. In 2000, he rankled Ted Kennedy and the teachers' unions by endorsing tough new testing for schools, yet he also proposed generous funding increases to make those standards achievable. This was the Third Way at its best: government demanding accountability but providing real help.



Liberals resent Lieberman's moralism. But what they see as sanctimony, many ordinary Americans see as overdue concern about the toxic influences that saturate their children's lives. Clinton acknowledged that concern with calculated micro-initiatives like the v-chip. But it is Lieberman, the more sincere New Democrat, who infuriated Hollywood—and thus denied himself a rich vein of campaign funds—by repeatedly insisting that the entertainment industry value the public good as well as the bottom line. Similarly, many liberals mocked Lieberman as self-righteous for denouncing Clinton on the Senate floor at the height of the Lewinsky affair. But, given the then-pervasive fear in the Democratic Party about crossing the Clintons, Lieberman's speech took courage. And it emboldened his colleagues to do the same, which helped keep Clinton's immorality from tainting the whole party.

The deep irony of Lieberman's campaign is that many Democrats view him as timid. But how much courage does it take for Dean to throw red meat to the party faithful? The Democratic Party is racing back to the '80s, with interest groups enforcing litmus tests on everything from partial-birth abortion to steel tariffs, and party activists dangerously out of touch with a country that feels threatened by terrorism, not Donald Rumsfeld. Dean has helped create this mood of self-righteous delusion, and his competitors have, to varying degrees, accommodated themselves to it. Only Lieberman—the supposed candidate of appeasement—is challenging his party, enduring boos at event after event, to articulate a different, better vision of what it means to be a Democrat.

Three years ago, that vision seemed ascendant. Today, it is once again at the margins. It may take years, or even decades, for Democrats to relearn the lessons we thought, naïvely, they had learned for good under Clinton. But one day, Joe Lieberman's warnings in this campaign will look prophetic. And the principles he has espoused will once again guide the Democratic Party. It will be the work of this magazine, to whatever small degree possible, to hasten that day. ■

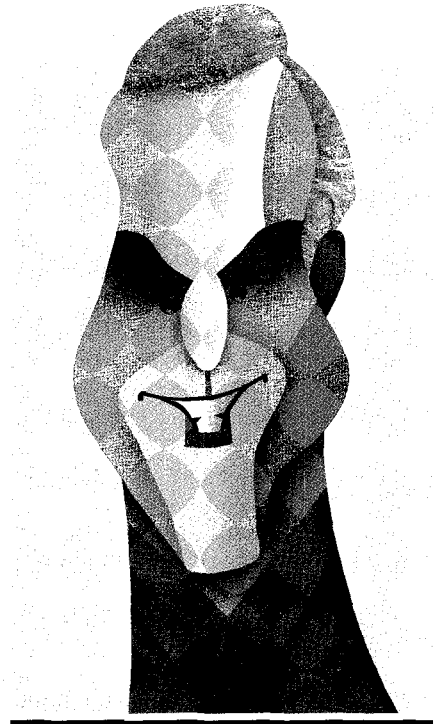
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

HOWARD DEAN'S GREAT AWAKENING . . . GEORGE W. BUSH'S TRUTH-EVADING

APOCRYPHA

IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS, HOWARD Dean has publicly found Jesus, and we like to think that we had something to do with it. Soon after THE NEW REPUBLIC's Franklin Foer called attention to the electoral implications of Dean's secularism on the stump ("Beyond Belief," December 29, 2003–January 12, 2004), the candidate began incessantly referring to his faith in Christ. But Dean still hasn't really solved his religion problem. In fact, his foray into religious politics has been so ham-fisted that it has unwittingly highlighted his lack of religiosity. It doesn't require a rarified understanding of theology (or politics) to pick up his missteps. As *The New York Times'* Jodi Wilgoren pointed out, Dean cited Job as his favorite New Testament book—a compelling choice, except for the fact that Job resides in the Old Testament. From there, Dean's problem gets worse. Explaining his past reluctance to divulge details about his spiritual life, he told the *Times*, "I'm a New Englander, so I'm not used to wearing religion on my sleeve and being as open about it." But this regional caricature is just as clumsy and revealing as his famous comments about "guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks." While stereotyped as the home of quiet secularism, New England has actually been the noisy epicenter of America's great religious debates—and you don't need to go back to Jonathan Edwards to find them. Anyone who has cracked *The Boston Globe* in the past year has read about the fierce intramural fight among the city's Catholics concerning the fate of their church. In neighboring New Hampshire, Episcopalians have publicly gone to war with one another over the appointment of a gay bishop. So, instead of justifying Dean's reluctance to discuss religion, his comments show his removal from it. Finally, and most troublingly, he has been a bit too honest about his sudden outburst of spiritualism. "I'm gradually getting more comfortable with talking about religion in ways that I did not talk about it before," he said. In other words, when he wasn't a front-running presidential candidate, his faith was a private matter. Only when it looked like he might pay a political price for his religious privacy has he broken with this principle. Such straight talk is admirable, of course—except when you're trying to fake it.



Howard Dean

AIDE AND ABET

WHENEVER WE HEAR FROM PRESident Bush or his spokespeople on the matter of who in his administration leaked the name and identity of the CIA covert operative Valerie Plame, the wife of White House critic Joe Wilson, they assure us that the president is determined to snag the culprit. "The president has always said that leaking classified information is a serious matter, and certainly no one wants to get to the bottom of this more than he does so that we can find out the truth," Bush's press secretary, Scott McClellan, said this week. And, now that John Ashcroft has recused himself from the leak investigation and appointed U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald to oversee it, Bush may be close to getting what he and his aides insist is his wish: the truth.

But it would be a lot easier to believe this was Bush's honest wish if he'd do more than simply say it were so. In the last week, federal investigators have reportedly begun asking some Bush aides to sign FBI forms releasing reporters from any promises of confidentiality they made to sources regarding the leak of Plame's identity. Signing those forms would seem to comply with Bush's desire, as McClellan restated it this week, "that, if anybody has information, they should come forward and share it with those who are leading the investigation." After all, Robert Novak and the several other reporters who were evidently contacted by administration officials about Plame would be loath to reveal those contacts for fear of breaking such a confidentiality agreement. The waiver would allow them to come forward. But it's not clear whether Bush has instructed his aides to sign the waiver, because the White House refuses to say. "That's . . . a specific question about matters that should be directed to the career officials at the Justice Department," McClellan said this week. Alas, in this case, we're quite certain the search for truth must go through the Oval Office before it leads to justice.

POOR EXCUSE

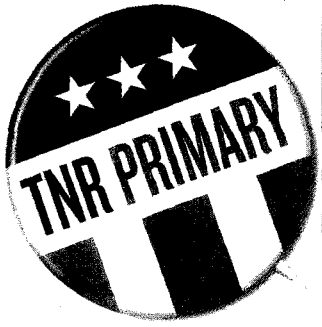
LAST MARCH, WHEN THE BUSH ADministration first got into trouble for trying to change federal overtime regulations, it insisted it was trying to help workers, not hurt them. At issue was a proposed change in the way employers classify their employees. Under the new rule Bush was floating, businesses could begin calling more of their

DAVID COWLES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

white-collar workers "exempt employees," meaning they'd no longer be entitled to overtime pay (time-and-a-half) when they worked more than 40 hours per week. Labor unions—and even some moderate Republicans—immediately raised a stink over the proposal, which threatened to affect millions of workers. But the administration had a response to their objections, and it was a good one: It would simultaneously make another change in the regulations—one that would guarantee overtime pay to 1.3 million low-income, salaried workers previously ineligible for it, many of them women and Hispanics, who would now earn more. Ultimately, this concession provided Republicans with just the political cover they needed to beat back an effort by House Democrats to block the rule changes.

But, lo and behold, now that the regulations are about to take effect, the administration doesn't seem so interested in helping poor workers anymore. The Associated Press reported this week that the Labor Department is putting out guidelines instructing employers on ways to get around the new regulations—among them, shifting salaried workers who would now be entitled to overtime in addition to their current incomes to low hourly wages, then adding in overtime pay so the final earnings are no greater than what the employee would have earned in the first place. In other words, workers would work more time for no more money. According to the Labor Department, this sort of "payroll adjustment" would leave the employer with "virtually no, or only a minimal increase in labor costs." As word of these guidelines spread, and criticism mounted, Ed Frank, the Labor Department spokesman, insisted it was no big deal: "We're not saying anybody should do any of this." But we're not sure we believe him: After all, he used to work for the National Federation of Independent Business, which opposes overtime pay in the first place. ■



SOUTHERN REVIVAL

Candidate: Wesley Clark
Category: General Likeability
Grade: B

Let's be clear: The central gimmick of Wesley Clark's new "True Grits" campaign through the South is just one step shy of unforgivably patronizing. Dishing up bowls of grits to supporters as a way of displaying one's Dixie bona fides is too cute by half and smacks of something some sharp-suited Yankee adviser dreamed up while watching Paris and Nicole slop the hogs on "The Simple Life."

That said, the meatier segments of Clark's "True Grits" kickoff speech weren't half bad. Instead of babbling about the joys of NASCAR, Clark waded in to talk about core Southern values like patriotism, family, and faith—areas where Democrats absolutely cannot cede the field to W. The general was particularly clever when tackling the God question, noting that faith isn't just about where or to whom you pray "but the values your faith teaches you: charity, integrity, kindness. Growing up in Arkansas, we always knew a few people who could preach a revival but who didn't live it. And now we've got one in the White House." Clark then enumerated a few of the ways in which Bush's uncharitable policies have undercut American families.

Very smooth. When it comes to Christian compassion, W. loves to talk the talk. But he has not been so hot at walking the walk—a fact Dems would do well to remind voters. Because, if the party is serious about making Republicans fight for Southern votes, its candidate will need to find a way to neutralize Bush on matters not only martial but also cultural. Cheesy grits gimmick notwithstanding, Clark has fired a solid opening shot.

—Michelle Cottle

TRADING STORIES

Candidate: Dick Gephardt
Category: Intellectual Honesty
Grade: D

In an interview with *The Washington Post* editors last week, Dick Gephardt offered his familiar lament that globalization is exacerbating human misery around the world. But, in decrying the 1993 passage of NAFTA, Gephardt got a little carried away: "I mean, we wander into [NAFTA]; we don't even talk about it. ... We don't even discuss it among the American people."

A quick check of the Congressional Record shows that Gephardt was not, in fact, taking a vacation when the agreement was passed. So it's hard to understand how he could have missed the long national debate about the treaty, which included the unprecedented prime-time debate between Al Gore and Ross "Giant Sucking Sound" Perot. I challenge Gephardt to cite an example, before or since, when an international trade agreement was debated on "Larry King Live."

Gephardt's insistence that Americans pay more attention to the social costs of free trade is an admirable one, even if some of his protectionist-leaning remedies are wrongheaded. But he should critique NAFTA on its merits, or lack thereof, rather than trying to rewrite history.—Michael Crowley

ANGER MANAGEMENT

Candidate: John Kerry
Category: General Likeability
Grade: B

The central thrust of John Kerry's unusually sharp speech in late December was that, in Howard Dean, Democrats risk choosing a nominee who will be crushed by George W. Bush. Kerry calls Dean "a candidate who, for all his anger, is on the wrong track economically and has no experience on the major security issues of the day." And he lambastes Dean's foot-in-mouth proclivities. "What kind of muddled thinking is it if you can't instantly say that, in your heart, you know [Osama] bin Laden is guilty? People are left wondering: 'What will he say next?' You don't have to listen too carefully to hear the sound of champagne corks popping in Karl Rove's office."

The core problem with Kerry's candidacy so far, it seems to me, has been that the man has never had a clear rationale for running. He has no Big Idea, no passionate constituency, no unique ideological niche. Kerry's campaign has always seemed mainly to be the logical culmination of the man's resumé. But the rise of Dean has finally given Kerry an urgent purpose—and therein lies the strength of this weekend's address. Kerry spoke about Dean with a passion often lacking when he's blabbing about the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Devout Kerry-haters will say it took another man's oversized ambition to finally put life into the senator's campaign. Maybe so. But at least Kerry finally seems to be doing something more than reciting his C.V.

—Michael Crowley

For primary items updated daily and complete candidate rankings, visit *www.tnr.com/primary.*

CARICATURES BY ZACH TRENHOLM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The case for Edwards.
The Wonk

BY MICHELLE COTTLE

FROM THE MOMENT it became clear Al Gore would not be the forty-third president of the United States, the Democratic Party has been searching for its next political savior. For a while, the buzz around the Beltway was that Senator John Edwards might just be it. With his youthful good looks, Southern charm, and small-town-boy-makes-good bio, Edwards was touted by many as the second coming of Bill Clinton—without the pesky zipper problem. The charismatic trial-lawyer-turned-lawmaker was, many political insiders whispered, the presidential contender that the Bushies most feared facing in 2004.

Increasingly, it looks like the Bushies can relax. The Edwards campaign has gone virtually nowhere. He's running toward the back of the pack in Iowa and New Hampshire and, in a recent CNN national poll, failed to garner enough support even to register in the ranking. And, despite the candidate's protestations that introducing himself to voters takes time, he is rapidly running out of it. Which is a shame, because Edwards still has the makings of a formidable challenger to George W. Bush, and not simply because of his toe-tingling smile and ability to connect with regular people. In fact, the superficial ways in which the senator resembles Clinton are, if anything, keeping people from recognizing the more substantive similarities between him and the Democrats' last political superstar.

THE MAIN RAP on Edwards is that, with his scant years in public office, he brings little more to the table than charm and an electorally advantageous biography. Not so. As Ryan Lizza noted in these pages in August, over the past year the dashing young buck from North Carolina has transformed himself into a devoted policy wonk, putting together an impressive array of domestic policy proposals, the particulars of which he has laid out in far greater detail than most of his competitors ("Makeover," August 11, 2003). For instance, the "position papers" featured on Dick Gephardt's website, covering such issues as pension reform and education, generally consist of a half-dozen or so short paragraphs broadly outlining a few basic proposals (e.g., the creation of a universal pension that would follow a worker through to retirement). Edwards's issue "fact sheets," by contrast, often go on for several pages, broken down into various subheadings and bullet points. Even as you read this, members of Team Edwards are trooping through the snows of Iowa and New Hampshire to distribute a 60-plus-page policy booklet titled "Real Solutions for America." Addressing everything from education to homeland security, the senator offers a veritable smorgasbord of the sort of smart, bite-sized policy proposals that Clinton employed to such great effect. Specifics include a $5,000 tax credit for first-time home buyers, scholarships for prospective teachers who pledge to work in lower-income schools for five years, and the creation of a homeland intelligence agency that would assume the information-gathering duties of the FBI.

And, unlike most high-promising pols, Edwards also explains how he intends to pay for his proposals, listing a range of cost-saving and income-generating measures that include opening more government procurement to competitive bidding, reducing subsidies for major oil and agricultural concerns, shrinking non-security-related federal agencies over the next decade, and repealing specific elements of the Bush tax cuts. It's true that some of Edwards's cost-saving plans may be difficult to achieve—is he really going to abolish the Office of Thrift Supervision and reduce other federal agencies by 10 percent per year for ten years?—but the specificity with which he lays them out allows one to judge them on the merits. Contrast this with the vague platitudes offered by his rivals. As *The Washington Post* recently complained of Howard Dean's big domestic policy rollout, "[Dean] includes access to affordable health care and child care, help with college tuition, a new retirement savings program and other worthy ideas. But beyond asserting that 'we must be responsible stewards, not profligate spenders,' Mr. Dean offers few details about how he would achieve these ambitious goals—and tackle a deficit set to exceed $500 billion this year."

Just as important, if not more so, Edwards has organized his myriad proposals within a compelling, easily articulated theme—what Clinton used to talk about as a campaign's "meta-message." While some voters (particularly in Iowa and New Hampshire) may like to immerse themselves in policy minutiae, many more simply want to be told the gist of what a candidate stands for. Just ask President Bush—a compassionate conservative! a reformer with results!—how effective a catchy meta-message can be. (Or ask Al "People versus the Powerful" Gore about the damage a poorly crafted one can do.) For his part, Edwards has pledged to put "our economy back in line with our values." Noting that the Bush tax cuts have shifted the proportional tax burden away from wealth-related income (by cutting taxes on capital gains, dividends, and inheritances) and onto work-related income, Edwards argues that the administration has declared "a war on work." The genius of this "wealth versus work" formulation, as Slate.com's William Saletan has noted, is that it enables Edwards to push progressive tax proposals without falling prey to GOP charges of class warfare. "Gore said he would fight the powerful because they were powerful," Saletan writes. "Edwards adds a moral dimension: The economy depends on virtue as well as money, and virtue lies in work. The reason to fight for the working class isn't just that it has less money, but that it shows more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

John Edwards is this year's Bill Clinton—in a good way.

virtue." This critique is a brilliant way of reaching out to socially conservative, blue-collar workers who might otherwise vote Republican. "Bush wins their votes by equating the free market with the work ethic," Saletan continues. "Show them where the free market betrays the work ethic, and they'll vote for the candidate of the work ethic against the candidate of the free market."

All of this enables Edwards to position himself as the champion of capitalism as it ought to work—where the playing field is relatively level and hard work is rewarded—and Bush as the champion of the way it too often does—with privileged insiders rigging the game to their own benefit. Apart from doing a nice job of capturing the fundamental nature of Bushonomics, this meta-message enables Edwards to convey what his campaign is about in a broad sense. Compare that with, say, Senator Joe Lieberman, who has laid out an economic plan for spurring both long- and short-term growth, including ways to revitalize business investment and stimulate consumer confidence, but whose proposals lack even the most tenuous theme for voters to latch onto.

To date, Edwards's biggest weakness—apart from the polls—has been that, as well-formulated as his domestic agenda is, his foreign policy seems equally scattershot. His speeches on the topic have been solid. But, when it comes time for Q & A, the senator isn't quite there yet. It's not just that he has trouble addressing detailed questions about nuclear proliferation and North Korea; it also appears that he does not have a clear philosophical framework within which to think about these issues.

That said, only one of the past five presidents had any significant foreign policy experience heading into office (which is pretty much what you'd expect in a nation that likes to send governors to the White House). And, whether you think our current commander-in-chief has been a dream or a disaster for U.S. foreign policy, there's no arguing that as a candidate W. had less experience—not to mention interest—in foreign affairs than does Edwards. Moreover, from what we've seen thus far, Edwards's international instincts are sensibly hawkish. Like most of the Democratic crop, he supported the war in Iraq (whatever you think of the war now, the case for it looked significantly more compelling pre-invasion—and clearly the majority of the American public supported it). He also backed military action in both Kosovo and Liberia. This is a far cry from Bush's quasi-isolationist, anti-nation-building position during the 2000 race. Of course, post–September 11, 2001, any Democratic challenger faces the daunting task of reassuring voters that he will be just as fierce in battling global terrorism as the Republicans have been. So, while Edwards may not be looking to win many votes on the strength of his foreign policy acumen, he must start talking a convincing enough game to neutralize the GOP's traditional edge in this arena.

The question of voter confidence brings us back to the original advantages Edwards was said to bring to this race—intangibles, such as charm, charisma, an ability to connect with people, and a basic likeability. These are the rock-star qualities Clinton brought to the job as both a candidate and a president, and the qualities that Gore so devastatingly did not. Policy and politics notwithstanding, many Americans vote with their gut. Particularly when both candidates are perceived as having similar policy positions—as was clearly the case in 2000—the deciding factor for voters (especially those undecided and swing voters without a strong party affiliation) is often which candidate they like the best. (Last time around, polls put Bush at a disadvantage vis à vis Gore in intelligence, experience, and basic policy positions, but he trumped Gore on voter perceptions of personality and leadership ability.) In politics, that indefinable spark matters. And, whatever the origin of this spark, most political-watchers acknowledge that Edwards has it. You can complain about the shallowness of the American electorate all you want, but this ability to make people like and trust you is, to some extent, what politics has always been about—and not just in terms of who gets elected. As Clinton so brilliantly illustrated, a winning persona also works wonders when it comes time to govern and you need to push your agenda items through a hostile Congress or soothe a base angered by centrist steps like welfare reform or free-trade agreements.

Less mysteriously, Edwards boasts certain cultural advantages that could help his party battle Bush outside the

William B. Plowman/Getty Images

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

safe Democratic havens of the Northeast and the West Coast. It's not so much that Edwards's Southernness ensures that he'll make a strong showing in Dixie per se: At this stage, it remains to be seen whether any Democrat can make meaningful inroads into the increasingly Republican Southeast. But, as a small-town son of the South who can talk comfortably about guns, God, family, and faith, Edwards could at the very least give the party a leg up in rural America more broadly, particularly in culturally traditional Heartland states like Missouri. Fair or not, much of Middle America bristles at the idea of some uppity Northeastern liberal trying to tell them how to run their lives. Which is a big part of the reason that, for the last 40 years or so, Democrats have done better when they fielded candidates with a bit of down-home appeal.

All of which is to say that Democrats should take care not to dismiss John Edwards as just another pretty face. Beneath that attractive facade beats the political heart of a Clintonesque New Democrat who could make a fine general-election candidate and a fine president. If only the party's primary voters give him a chance. ■

The case for Gephardt.

Old Faithful

BY MICHAEL CROWLEY

THE CASE FOR Richard Gephardt begins with the superficial case against him. It goes like this: Gephardt is a dullard, an ideological changeling, and the stale face of a timorous Washington Democratic establishment that has allowed George W. Bush and the GOP to rout it time and again. According to his critics, *The New York Times* recently explained, he is "the paradigmatic Congressional Democrat—too tactical and attuned to the polls."

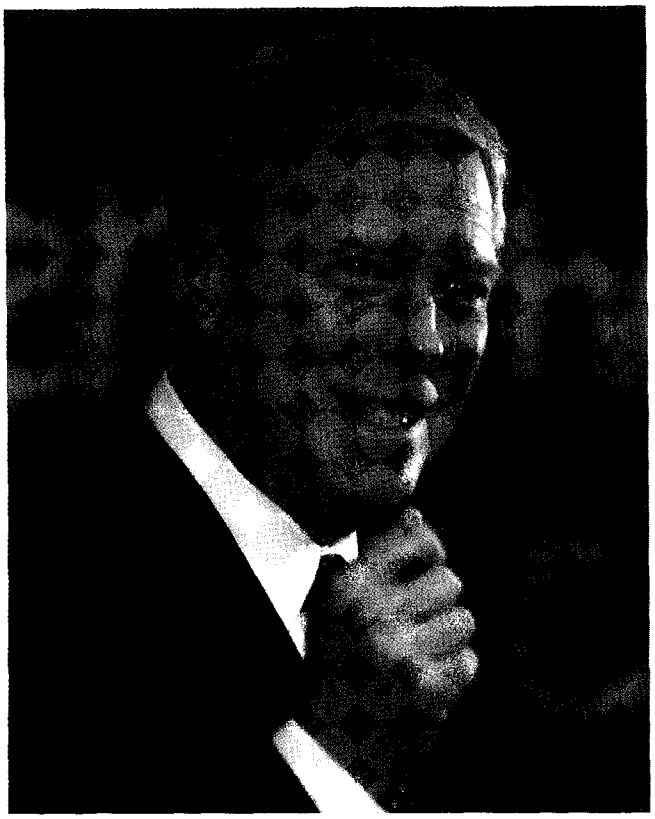
Well, yes, Richard Gephardt is a politician. Indeed, he has been in Washington for a long time. And, sure, his politics have changed over the years. But these aren't reasons to dismiss him. They're among the many reasons to consider him the best, and most electable, candidate the Democrats have to offer this year.

For starters, Gephardt is the most qualified person running. Twenty-seven years in Washington may be a liability in the eyes of some anti-establishment Democrats. But Gephardt deserves credit for so much time spent fighting in the partisan trenches against the Republicans, long before John Edwards or Wesley Clark entered politics and when many Deanophiles couldn't be bothered to vote. More to the point, nearly three decades in Washington have given Gephardt a mastery of policy and process that none of his rivals can match. There will be no learning curve, no policy tutoring sessions: President Gephardt would be ready from day one. Name any significant issue to pass through Congress since Gephardt became House Democratic leader in 1989—from the epic budget battles of the 1990s to the post–September 11 war on terrorism—and he's sure to have spent hours, sometimes hundreds of them, working on it.

Experience, of course, is no substitute for wisdom. In some ways Gephardt's instincts, particularly on trade policy, have a Mondale-Democrat flavor. But people tend to forget his role in some important centrist causes. Take his passion for tax fairness: Gephardt was instrumental in the passage of the loophole-closing, rate-lowering 1986 Tax Reform Act, perhaps the best tax bill in memory. As House Democratic leader in 1993, he battled furiously for Bill Clinton's economic plan, holding House Democrats together and squeaking out a victory without a single Republican vote. No, Gephardt didn't always embrace Clintonite centrism. (A 1997 address in which Gephardt derided Clintonism as a timid mélange of "small ideas that nibble around the edges of big problems" could have been given by Howard Dean in this campaign.) But, in one of his biggest breaks with the president—over a 1997 balanced-budget deal the White House cut with the GOP—Gephardt was correct. Although the deal was widely hailed as a noble act of bipartisanship, Gephardt impolitely argued (as did this magazine) that the upper-income tax cuts demanded by Republicans weren't a price worth paying and that the plan's promised deficit reduction was a fraud. (He was right: It was growth-spurred tax revenue that led to surpluses, not the budget deal's illusory spending caps.)

Of course, nothing divided Clinton and Gephardt more than trade. It's certainly true that Gephardt rejects Clinton's fundamental view that free trade inevitably leads to prosperity for everyone. But Gephardt isn't the simple-minded protectionist he was in his 1988 presidential campaign, during which he peddled harsh tariffs on imports. ("[A] genuine menace to the world economy," THE NEW REPUBLIC pronounced him at the time.) Since then, Gephardt has moderated both his views and his rhetoric. Although he strongly opposed NAFTA in 1993 and organized a stinging rejection of fast-track trade powers for Clinton in 1998, his support for the 1994 GATT agreement (which created the World Trade Organization) shows that his opposition to trade agreements is not entirely reflexive. Today, unlike some of his labor allies, Gephardt doesn't call for NAFTA's repeal. Instead of a Buchananite call for tariffs, he proposes requiring nations to implement minimum wages, varying according to their economies, as a condition for entry into the World Trade Organization. And his general support for more environmental and labor protections in trade treaties is, for better or worse, a mainstream Democratic position and one likely to be held by any nominee other than Joe Lieberman. (Gephardt showed that such provisions don't have to be deal-breakers when he helped add environmental protections to a 2000 U.S. trade pact with Jordan.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The more you look at Dick Gephardt, the better he seems.

Gephardt's rhetoric on trade has grown more sophisticated, too. Where in 1988 he demagogued the issue with borderline xenophobic appeals, he now shows a genuine, even moving, compassion for the welfare of foreign workers as well as domestic ones.

Curiously, Gephardt's passion for international trade never seemed to extend to foreign affairs and defense issues. Unlike many of his liberal House colleagues, Gephardt was never a down-the-line dove. Although he voted for a nuclear freeze and an end to Contra aid in the '80s, as a candidate in 1988 he was more hawkish than rivals Paul Simon and Michael Dukakis on issues like the Defense budget and the Midgetman nuclear missile. In the '90s, he resisted calls for huge post-cold-war Pentagon budget cuts and supported Clinton's interventions in Kosovo and Bosnia without hesitation.

Still, given the times, the low priority Gephardt once afforded foreign policy would ordinarily be troubling. But the September 11 attacks seem to have profoundly awakened him. There is no better example than his thinking about Iraq. Before the first Gulf war, Gephardt led House opposition to the conflict, arguing for extended sanctions and warning that 10,000 Americans could perish. In October 2002, by contrast, he stood with George W. Bush in the White House Rose Garden, the first Democratic Party leader to embrace the president's war resolution. Horrified liberals questioned the sincerity of this sudden conversion. But, while one can never be certain, Gephardt certainly sounds like a man genuinely transformed. He speaks convincingly about nights he has spent lying awake, fearing for his personal safety. And, more vividly than any other candidate, he invokes the specter of "an A-bomb in a Ryder truck" exploding in a U.S. city. Ultimately, however, there's no better evidence of Gephardt's sincerity on Iraq than his brave vote this fall for Bush's $87 billion Iraq appropriations bill. At a moment when every party pollster and interest group said support for the bill was political suicide, Gephardt—unlike John Edwards, John Kerry, Howard Dean, or Wesley Clark—supported it nonetheless. Doing so undoubtedly hurt him in dovish Iowa and may have cost him some desperately needed union endorsements. But the bravery and principle of his stand was nothing less than, well, presidential.

ACCORDING TO WASHINGTON conventional wisdom, bravery and principle are hardly the hallmarks of Gephardt's career. He did, after all, come to the House in 1977 as a conservative Democrat, pro-life, pro-gun, and anti-busing. Most dismayingly, Gephardt even supported the 1981 Reagan tax cut. A suspiciously timed flip-flop on abortion—just before his 1988 presidential campaign—forever branded Gephardt as expedient. But is he more expedient than any other national politician with a long resumé? It's hardly surprising that a representative from a Catholic working-class district would change his views after wider national exposure—just as Al Gore outgrew his conservative origins as a rural Tennessee senator and George H. W. Bush abandoned his Northeastern Republican pro-choice views. Gephardt also seems willing to learn from his more recent mistakes. He freely admits that supporting the 1981 tax cut and resisting the first Gulf war were wrong. And, although he mistakenly opposed welfare reform in 1996, he hasn't pressed for loosened work requirements as Bill Bradley did in 2000.

Gephardt's chameleonic image has been perpetuated by his tenure as House Democratic leader from 1995 to 2002. In part, that's the nature of the job: During those years, Gephardt had to speak not for himself but for a caucus of more than 200 Democrats of kaleidoscopic interests and shifting ideologies, requiring that he craft a message that balanced the interests of both liberals and rural moderates. This was particularly true in the 2000 and 2002 election cycles, when Democrats were desperately hoping to win back the House of Representatives—a feat that demanded victories in rural and Southern districts, where a liberal national message would have been disastrous.

Dean suggests this was a period when Democrats like Gephardt were cravenly selling out to the GOP. But there's not much evidence of that. In the months leading up to the 2000 election, for instance, Republican leaders were furious that Gephardt was not more willing to compromise with them on issues like gun control and HMO reform; after the GOP killed strong Democratic bills on those subjects, Gephardt preferred no action to the GOP's watered-down, fig-leaf substitutes. And, although he did resist calls for a

BRIAN SNYDER/REUTERS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(futile) effort to repeal the Bush tax cuts in the months before the 2002 elections, Gephardt furiously denounced them before they passed.

If Gephardt at times seemed ineffectual in the House, it is because he often was literally powerless. In recent years, Republican leaders have exploited House rules to an unprecedented degree, routinely denying Democrats the chance to offer amendments, substitute bills, and even debate on the House floor. Often he could do little more than call a press conference to denounce the GOP's latest foul ploy. And, when it came to fights Democrats had a better chance of winning, such as the hard-fought House passage of campaign finance reform in 2002—a measure many observers expected Gephardt would cynically allow to die—Gephardt proved he could grind out a hard-fought victory.

Indeed, Gephardt's legislative cunning is one of his best assets. In 1993, he presciently warned Clinton that his detailed health care plan would be ripped to shreds by interest groups and urged Clinton to submit broad principles to Congress instead. Gephardt also gave Clinton valuable advice on how to sell his economic plan. As detailed by Bob Woodward in *The Agenda*, Gephardt advised Clinton to meet with undecided congressmen to make them feel important and "personally invested" in the bill, so the congressmen could brag to wary constituents that they'd lectured the president about their district's needs. (Gephardt himself would have no trouble enduring such listening sessions: In the House, he was nicknamed "Iron Butt.")

Admittedly, no amount of cunning will save some of Gephardt's key proposals. From universal preschool to his ill-advised universal health care plan, Gephardt has proposed some $3 trillion in new spending—but explained how he would pay for only half of it. His health care plan is especially fanciful: Costing $2.3 trillion over ten years, the scheme extends generous tax credits to businesses for insuring their employees. Gephardt says he'll fund the plan by repealing the Bush tax cuts. Even then, the country would still confront huge budget deficits in the face of a looming entitlements crisis. In better economic times, Gephardt's plan might make sense, but not now. That's why it will be dead on arrival in Congress, forcing Gephardt to devise a saner alternative. Fortunately, his legislative expertise and Capitol Hill savvy make him the best man to do that.

THESE ARE GOOD enough reasons to support Gephardt. But what truly sets him apart from the rest of the Democratic field can be summed up in one word: electability.

Bush begins the 2004 race with two substantial advantages. First is his perceived strength on national security. A recent ABC News/*Washington Post* poll found that the public trusts Bush to handle national security over Dean by a breathtaking 67-to-21 margin. It may not be fair, but the Ed Gillespies of the world will say anything to ensure dovishness on Iraq becomes a proxy for Democrats' unwillingness to defend the nation. Among the Democrats with a plausible shot at the nomination—Dean, Clark, and Gephardt—only the Missourian supported the war. Once nominated, then, only he would avoid the inevitable charge that, had he been president, Saddam Hussein would still be torturing children and plotting America's destruction. (Yes, Gephardt's support for the war would turn off some liberal voters. But so much so that they'd rather see Bush reelected than go to the polls for a longtime core Democrat? Doubtful.)

Bush's second big advantage is his folksy, mendaciously populist appeal. In 2000, Bush managed to seem more like an average American than did Al Gore. But is there a Democrat or Republican in politics today who looks and sounds more like Middle America than Dick Gephardt? While his charisma may not be blinding, Gephardt's plain Midwestern manner conveys an essential, all-American virtue. (It even extends to his wife's name: The Gephardts are, literally, Dick and Jane.) Moreover, after nearly three decades in public life, Gephardt's ethical record is unblemished—not a single miniscandal in an era that has thrived on them. All of which helps to explain why he is surrounded by talented staffers who stand out for their loyalty and longtime commitment. This isn't just a testament to Gephardt's character—it's a real political asset. As Gore learned in 2000, a roster of feuding, mercenary advisers can cripple a campaign. By contrast, as Karl Rove and Karen Hughes have shown, ultra-loyal aides can be political Kevlar.

Gephardt's long political tenure has also made him a supremely disciplined, on-message speaker. Try to recall the last time he made a major gaffe. You can't. Sure, Dean speaks more "authentically." He also wastes half his time mopping up after blurted-out opinions from the day before, something that will cost him dearly against the more disciplined Bush. Gephardt knows the value of pausing a beat.

Then there's his personal story. Gephardt's upbringing as the son of a Teamster milkman who grew up in Catholic, blue-collar St. Louis lends a powerful authenticity to his working-class-oriented politics. (It's also a fine contrast to Bush's patrician roots, far better than Dean's Manhattan roots or even Clark's urban Chicago origins.) This innate credibility should translate into real grassroots, general-election strength. Gephardt's union supporters may not have the fanaticism of Dean's, but they're close: Just last week, more than a dozen international unions flew in hundreds of ground troops to give him a last push in Iowa. Taken together, these factors suggest Gephardt could be a nightmare for Bush in major industrial swing states—Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania—where job losses and vast union machines will work enormously in Gephardt's favor. No other candidate, save perhaps Edwards in the South, has so strong a regional-electoral advantage.

Indeed, the strength of Gephardt's primary candidacy is a sign of what his political discipline, staff loyalty, and solid political base could mean in a general-election battle. Among the establishment Democrats in this race, only Gephardt has exceeded expectations. The others—Edwards, Kerry, and Joe Lieberman—have all badly under-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

performed. Despite lacking Kerry's money, Lieberman's name recognition, and Edwards's fresh face, Team Gephardt has made a campaign that seemed futile a year ago second today only to the strange, and possibly combustible, alchemy of Dean for America.

There's a reason, in other words, why Republicans call Gephardt, as *The Washington Post* recently put it, "the Democratic candidate best prepared and positioned to defeat President Bush in a head-to-head matchup next year." Here's hoping that he makes it that far. ■

The case for Clark.

Credible Threat

BY J. PETER SCOBLIC

WELL BEFORE HE officially launched his candidacy in mid-September, Wesley Clark was hailed as the Democrats' savior. Party strategists, convinced that the front-running Howard Dean would flame out against George W. Bush, saw in Clark not only a sensible political alternative but, just as important, an electable one. Clark's 34 years in the Army—which included a heroic tour in Vietnam and culminated in four stars—and his public criticism of the Iraq war had made him a darling among centrist liberals who saw a bemedaled general as the perfect antidote to the GOP's national security dominance.

And, in the three-plus months since he entered the fray (indeed, even before he entered the fray), those supporters have been relentlessly plugging Clark's military credentials. A Zogby poll commissioned and touted by DraftWesleyClark.com shows the general beating all of his rivals in a "blind-bio" test, in which respondents were asked to rate the presidential candidates based only on nameless one-paragraph resumés. (Clark's advertised him as "a four-star general," "NATO supreme commander," "first in his class at West Point," and "a Vietnam Veteran.") One of the campaign's TV ads in New Hampshire, which shows a young Clark receiving the Silver Star, recounts his valor in a 1970 battle: "The first bullet shattered his hand. The second and third hit his shoulder and leg. As he hit the jungle floor, he rallied the troops and directed the firefight." As the *Chicago Tribune* put it in a recent profile, "Clark is running on the hero myth."

But all the talk about how Clark's biography makes him electable has overwhelmed the more important point: It would also make him a good president. In the last decade, the specter of genocide arose twice in the Balkans; both times, Clark was instrumental in beating it back despite tepid support among political and military elites. In Bosnia, in 1995, Clark fought to continue bombing Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic's forces—a move that forced their withdrawal from Sarajevo and enabled the Dayton peace process, which yielded a successful peacekeeping and reconstruction operation. And, in 1999, with the world sitting idly by as thousands of ethnic Albanians were slaughtered in Kosovo, Clark—by then NATO's supreme allied commander of Europe—repeatedly bucked his Pentagon superiors and pushed for intervention. He then proceeded to hold together the fractious NATO alliance through a 78-day air war that succeeded in stopping the atrocities and ultimately resulted in Milosevic standing trial for war crimes.

More than just an asset for Clark's political campaign, this diplomatic and military experience provides the brains and the brawn behind a worldview that prioritizes threats to U.S. security without sacrificing humanitarian imperatives, that seeks to solve problems through negotiation but is bolstered with a proven willingness to use force. Unlike Democratic rivals who try to demonstrate their foreign policy bona fides by showcasing their Senate votes, the retired general has actually waged the "muscular multilateralism" that his opponents use as a catchphrase. For this reason, Clark is the best solution for a Democratic Party struggling to prove it can protect the United States from terrorists and weapons of mass destruction—not only because Americans will sleep better with a general, rather than a politician, in the Oval Office, but because they'll sleep safer.

IT'S TRUE THAT Clark's worldview appeared a little shaky 24 hours into his candidacy. Asked on September 18, 2003, if he would have voted for the October 2002 congressional resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq, the ostensibly antiwar general equivocated: "At the time, I probably would have voted for it, but I think that's too simple a question. ... I don't know if I would have or not." That quote, combined with subsequent claims that he would never have voted for the resolution, led to a minor media frenzy, on which Clark's rivals were quick to capitalize. "He took six different positions on whether going to war was the right idea," Joe Lieberman charged at one debate.

In truth, Clark's position was consistent, if poorly explained: He thought the threat of force was necessary to bring Saddam Hussein into compliance with U.N. resolutions, but he disapproved of the Bush administration's anemic diplomacy in late 2002 and early 2003. Had Clark been in Congress, he likely would have supported the alternative resolution sponsored by Joe Biden and Richard Lugar requiring the president to return to Congress before invading Iraq; following the failure of that alternative, he likely would have voted for the resolution that eventually passed, as Biden and Lugar themselves did. In any case, Clark's stance on the war resolution has less bearing on the fitness of his foreign policy than his stance on the war itself. And on this Clark has been perfectly clear: "Saddam Hussein did

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pose a national security challenge. There is no dispute about that. He was in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. If he didn't still have weapons of mass destruction, he was trying to acquire them. He remained hostile to his neighbors. But it was clear then, and it is even clearer today, that Saddam Hussein posed no imminent threat to the region or the world." In short, "We didn't have to do this operation. It was [an] elective war."

On this point, Clark has been proved correct. Not only has no evidence been uncovered of an active Iraqi nuclear program or Saddam's alleged ties to Al Qaeda; there has been no sign of ongoing biological or chemical weapons programs, either. Oddly, this lack of evidence for the fundamental rationale for war has not changed the minds of many Democratic hawks, who consider support for the war a litmus test of foreign policy seriousness—even as they roundly criticize the president's conduct of foreign policy before, during, and after the war. Lieberman, defending his vote for the war resolution, has said, "It was time for decisiveness, which is what people expect in their president, not uncertainty and ambivalence." Perhaps so. But they also expect, or at least deserve, a measure of self-reflection. Maintaining a position in the face of overwhelming evidence that it was wrong is not decisive; it's delusional.

Lieberman (and the Bush administration) now argues that the war was worthwhile because Saddam was a despicable tyrant who invaded two of his neighbors, used chemical weapons against the Kurds, and routinely brutalized his people. All of which is true. But the question was never whether the world would be better off without Saddam—of course it is. The question was whether the costs of ousting him outweighed the benefits. And, on that question, the jury is still out.

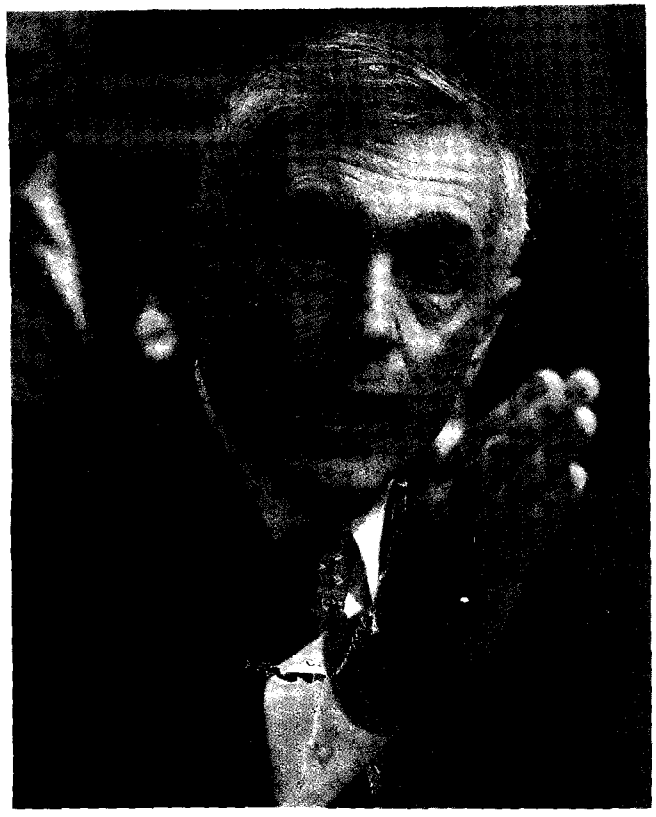
After all, the costs have been significant: the lives of 483 American soldiers (as well as thousands of Iraqi civilians), $150 billion, an immeasurable loss of U.S. authority abroad, and the diversion of military and diplomatic resources from other threats. (*Newsweek*, noting that Special Forces units were pulled out of Afghanistan in early 2002 for redeployment to the Middle East, reported, "Privately, some U.S. officials acknowledge that the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq may have seriously drained away resources from the hunt for [Osama] bin Laden.") As Clark has argued, "The administration zeroed in on Iraq. But focusing on Iraq made no sense—if the real goal was to protect the United States either from weapons of mass destruction or terrorism. The hundred tons of loosely guarded nuclear-bomb-making material and bioweapons in Russia presents a far more tempting target for terrorists. But this administration has not made that a priority. The nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea were more advanced and more threatening than Iraq's, but for months they paid little attention. Their actions made no strategic sense; they downplayed the greater threats and exaggerated the lesser one."

Despite its inherent logic, this critique seems lost on those Democratic candidates—Lieberman, Dick Gephardt, sometimes John Edwards and John Kerry—competing with Clark for the mantle of top security dog. Lieberman, for example, has argued that American soldiers in Iraq "are now involved in a critical battle in the war on terrorism, because terrorists have come in there to strike at us and strike at the instruments of civilization." But this point—which the president also makes every time he calls Iraq the "central front" in the war on terrorism—is tautological. Clearly, if Iraq is the central front in the war on terrorism, it is only because we made it so by invading the country. Other Democrats may consider themselves courageous for sticking with their support for a war whose chief rationale has evaporated, but far more valuable are Clark's common sense and his ability to prioritize dangers—a crucial ability for a commander-in-chief who will face a broad spectrum of threats with finite military, financial, and diplomatic resources.

Clark does have one stain on his Iraq record: his refusal to support the president's request for $87 billion to rebuild Iraq and pay for the troops there, a position that is hard to see as anything other than a sop to antiwar Democrats eager to punish Bush in any way possible. Fortunately, it does not seem to be indicative of a desire on Clark's part to abandon Iraq. Quite the opposite. He has said that he could envision circumstances under which he would request more than $87 billion for Iraq operations, and he has acknowledged that we may need to deploy more American troops to the country in the short term. As he told reporters on September 18, 2003, "Now that we're there, I want the mission to succeed."

CLARK HAS ALSO outlined a plan for the reconstruction of Iraq that calls for handing security over to NATO and internationalizing the reconstruction. If these suggestions sound familiar, it's because they've been touted in one form or another by all the Democratic candidates. And, as many commentators have noted, the problem with those suggestions is that persuading countries opposed to the war to participate in its cleanup has proved exceedingly difficult. Ultimately, however, what makes Clark's multilateral approach feasible and sets it apart from his competitors' is less the approach itself than the fact that he would be the one implementing it. Clark, after all, essentially did in Europe what he says we ought to have done in Iraq—i.e., successfully wage a multilateral war such that it leaves us with allies committed to winning the peace. In Kosovo, each step of the air campaign—ranging from decisions about what planes would be used to the selection of targets—required the concurrence of the alliance's 19 member states. As a result, the war was a "maddening assignment" complicated "by political forces, such as hope that just a few strikes would compel Milosevic's surrender, thirst for a bombing pause, fear of civilian casualties, exaggerated fear of the Serbs' military capabilities, and the American military's reluctance to risk Apache helicopters," Clark writes in his memoir, *Waging Modern War*. And yet the general held the alliance together and forced Milosevic to back down. He was able to do so, he writes, not in spite of the strictures imposed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Wesley Clark isn't just the foreign policy candidate; he'd be the foreign policy president.

by coalition warfare but because of them. When alliance leaders signed on to the mission, they became inextricably committed to its success: "[They] could not afford to fail. ... [T]heir own political survival was at stake." Extending this observation to today's war, Clark says, "If we had used NATO to launch the war on terrorism, we would have had the military, moral, political, and financial commitment of nineteen nations including Turkey determined to make a success of the mission and determined to defend our actions to their people and the world." Clark's call to multilateralize the occupation is therefore not simply an amorphous criticism of the Bush administration's handling of postwar Iraq. It's a recommendation grounded in Clark's position at the vanguard of post-cold-war military operations and peacekeeping. (It doesn't hurt that he has worked closely with the Europeans, whose reluctance was a focal point of opposition to the Iraq war. Indeed, Clark has devoted an entire plank of his platform toward restoring relations with the Continent via a "new Atlantic charter.")

Clark's multilateralism is pragmatic, not fetishistic. His foreign policy puts self-interest first while allowing for humanitarian interventions, emphasizes diplomacy and international institutions while reserving the right for unilateral action, and endorses the value of nonproliferation treaties while acknowledging their weaknesses. His take on the use of force is pitch-perfect: "We always have the right of self-defense, including inherently the right to strike pre-emptively," he writes. "But force must be used only as a last resort—and then multilaterally if possible." In these respects, Clark again stands out not so much for the uniqueness of his philosophy as for the fact that he has actually put it to use. While many of the Democratic presidential candidates might agree with the tenor of Clark's broad policy guidelines, it's not clear that they would be willing to back up the soft side of U.S. power with its harder edge. With Clark, on the other hand, there is little doubt. It was Clark, after all, who during the Bosnian war demanded—to the point of hectoring a furious superior officer—that bombing continue until Milosevic withdrew from Sarajevo. And it was Clark, together with a handful of Clinton officials, who pushed for military intervention in Kosovo when the Pentagon brass and many NATO leaders preferred to do nothing. Clark, unlike his rivals, has actually led wars, not just voted for them.

None of which is to say there are no differences between Clark's specific proposals and those of his rivals. In Iraq, Clark wants to transfer power to the people by allowing the 50 elected local councils already operating in the country to choose an interim government, "just as the state legislatures once elected members to our Senate." From the opening days of his campaign, Clark has been talking about the need to de-radicalize Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, countries Lieberman doesn't discuss in his major foreign policy addresses (even the Connecticut senator's recent *National Interest* piece on Islam fails to mention Pakistan and Saudi Arabia). He wants to hand over the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq to the United Nations immediately, so that the 1,000-plus intelligence officers, linguists, and Special Forces now doing that job can be transferred to the hunt for bin Laden and Al Qaeda. He understands that we can use U.S. support for treaties—such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and an enforcement protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention—not only to enhance U.S. security but to restore ties with European capitals. And, while all the candidates have called for direct negotiations with Pyongyang to end North Korea's nuclear weapons program, Clark is the only one to observe, smartly, that the early decision to make China the multilateral talks' de facto arbiter, rather than to bring it to the table later, has left Washington owing Beijing a favor, rather than the other way around.

CLARK'S EXPERIENCE, BEYOND grounding his robust foreign policy, will also insulate him from the Pentagon and Republican hostility that has consistently bedeviled Democratic presidents. Whereas President Clinton and his advisers often seemed intimidated by the military—James Carville, a former Marine corporal, likes to say he was the highest-ranking military official in the administration—Clark will have no trouble standing up to the four-stars. (If he was willing to do so when they were his superiors, he surely will be when they're his subordinates.) And the moral authority he will possess as commander-in-chief will make it harder for a GOP Congress to stymie a liberal internationalist agenda that empha-

CHIP EAST/ZUMA PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sizes diplomacy and treaties as tools of U.S. security and sanctions military deployment for humanitarian purposes.

Clark may also be able to persuade the antiwar left of the merits of a true muscular multilateralism—not least through his proposal for a New American Patriotism, which aims to restore the pride that Democrats, disaffected by the Bush administration's jingoism, feel toward the flag. In part, he plans to do this by encouraging the dissent on security issues that has been discouraged, implicitly and explicitly, by Republican leaders. On the stump, Clark often says, "There's nothing more American—nothing more patriotic—than speaking out, questioning authority, and holding your leaders accountable." Such declarations could ease the fears of an American public that, once bitten by the deception of the Iraq war, may be twice shy about future uses of military force. If the need arose, Americans would follow Wesley Clark into war. They should follow him to the White House first. ■

The case for Dean.

Moral Center

BY JONATHAN COHN

When I first interviewed Howard Dean in early 2002, the Iraq war was still a glint in Dick Cheney's eye, nobody had heard of Meetup.com, and Dean's campaign organization numbered all of one. Beyond Vermont, he was virtually unknown: As we walked through downtown Boston, not a soul recognized him. He was also a more simple character then—just another earnest public servant embarking on a long-shot bid for the White House. Dean had been charming: blunt, as always, but in a disarming, comical way. Eventually I wrote a piece touting his strong record and provocative critique of President Bush. Then I predicted his lack of money and notoriety would doom him to obscurity.

OK, so I got that last part wrong. Did I also exaggerate his virtues? Every week seems to expose new political liabilities and gaps in Dean's resumé. At times, he has been more angry than funny, more messianic than inspiring—basically, as unrecognizable to me as he was to those Bostonians we passed on the streets. But Dean has also proved more resourceful than I ever imagined. And the fundamental rationales for his candidacy—his accomplishments in Vermont and proposals for the United States—are as compelling today as they were two years ago. They're just a lot harder to see.

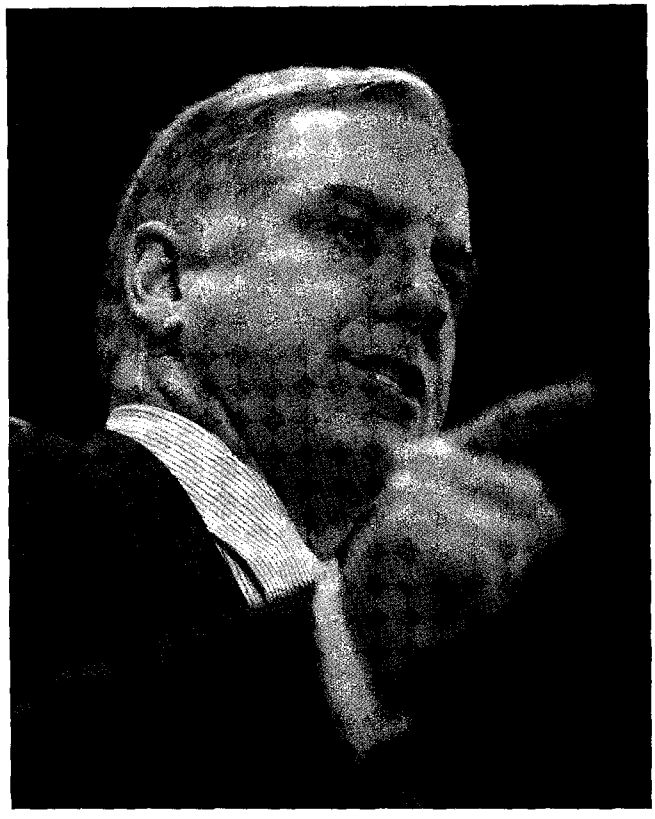
When Dean became governor in 1991, Vermont had a $65 million deficit and New England's lowest bond rating. Arguing that such conditions would starve the state of its ability to help citizens in need and scare away employers, Dean made responsible fiscal management his first order of business, reducing spending and taxes. This allowed him to eliminate the deficit within three years and then build up a rainy-day fund. Today, Vermont has New England's highest bond rating. And, virtually alone among states, it has avoided draconian cuts in its social programs—by tapping Dean's surpluses.

Those results haven't always mollified Dean's critics on the left, who wanted him to be less accommodating to big business and less thrifty with the state's money. But Dean was just as headstrong when it came to pursuing the goals he did share with liberals—expanding health insurance and social services for low-income children. Under Dean, Vermont plowed money into its Medicaid program, broadening eligibility to include working families—families too poor to afford insurance but too well-off to qualify for assistance under the old Medicaid guidelines. As a result, nearly every child in Vermont now has health insurance. A less well-known—but in many ways more innovative—policy triumph of the Dean years was the enactment of "Success by Six." That program offers the parents of newborns home visits from local social workers, who can advise on everything from what you should feed your baby to whom you call if you think you qualify for government assistance. Nine in ten Vermont parents opt for the visits, and state officials say the program helps identify problem cases—like cases of physical abuse—in their early stages.

These successes are why no less an authority than Bill Clinton has said, "Nobody did a better job on health care than [Dean] did as governor of Vermont." Implicit in that quote is what really set Dean apart as a governor: Not only does he have the right priorities; he has the right *character*. In 1991, it would have been far easier to let Vermont's Democrat-controlled legislature run wild with spending, as it had in the past. But, despite having virtually no political capital to spend—as lieutenant governor, he'd inherited the governorship after his Republican predecessor died—Dean held firm on fiscal policy and won. Similarly, after Dean tried and failed to enact a sweeping health care reform along the lines of what Clinton had proposed for the nation, it would have been far easier to give up and concentrate on narrow, easy-to-pass measures like HMO reform. Instead, Dean kept pursuing universal coverage through incremental expansions and nearly got it.

Dean showed the same fortitude in the most controversial episode of his tenure, the fight over gay rights. In 1999, the Vermont Supreme Court declared that it was unconstitutional to deny gay couples the same rights as married heterosexual couples, ordering the legislature to pass a remedy. Although Dean had not sought this fight, he didn't shrink from it, either. Within hours, Dean announced his support for "civil unions," granting gay couples marriage rights without actually calling it marriage. Some state legislators would later suggest putting off a vote by calling for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Forget all the melodrama: Howard Dean was an extraordinary governor.

"further study." But, according to Vermont journalist Mark Bushnell in *Howard Dean: A Citizen's Guide to the Man Who Would be President*, Dean urged them to press ahead, telling one legislator that delay might endanger the measure's passage. "This is something we need to do, and we need to do it as fast as we can." Dean is no saint: He refused to hold a public signing ceremony, likely because it would have given his political opponents fodder. But, nonetheless, Dean took real risks by backing a civil-unions bill—and not only to his career: In 2000, he got so many death threats that the state police asked him to wear a bullet-proof vest at campaign appearances.

TO BE FAIR, the problem for most Dean critics isn't his record—it's that his famously radical campaign seems like such a departure from that record. But just what, exactly, is so new about Dean on the stump? It's certainly not his proposed domestic policies. Much like Vermont in 1991, the United States in 2004 faces two urgent domestic problems: out-of-control deficits and a growing population with no health insurance. As governor, Dean's answer was to end the legislature's profligacy—which meant reining in spending—and to tell the people they'd be better off with sound financial management. As president, Dean would do the same—only, this time, ending Congress's profligacy would mean repealing the Bush tax cuts. Having accomplished that, Dean would pivot in exactly the way he did as governor, using some of the government's money to help the uninsured. His reform plan? A series of incremental steps modeled—you guessed it—on the programs that worked so well in Vermont.

Admittedly, raising taxes can be dangerous politically. But put that aside for a moment and ask the question surprisingly few Dean critics ever pose: Do these moves make sense as policy? Absolutely. There was a case for tax cuts while the economy was in recession, but only temporary and targeted ones, which is precisely what the Bush tax cuts are not. By returning the tax code to what it was while Clinton was president—it hardly seems heretical when you put it that way—Dean would reduce the deficit and put the government on track to do what it did during the later Clinton years: paying down the debt and thereby freeing up money in the federal budget to cover the baby-boomers' impending retirement expenses.

Dean's critics insist that it's worth preserving certain elements of the Bush tax cut—most important, a child tax credit worth up to $2,000 for a middle-class family with two children. But, as Dean has rightly pointed out, it's not like every hardworking taxpayer in the United States is getting a $2,000 check from the government this year; for the majority of Americans, the tax break is just a few hundred dollars. And, while struggling families can certainly use the money, the proper question is what they would get if they didn't have that tax break. The answer is that they'd get better access to health insurance, better public schools, better homeland defense, and better retirement programs—public goods that individuals can't buy on their own.

None of this is to say Dean has not transformed himself; it's just that, at this point, the transformation has more to do with rhetoric than policy. A man who spent his career in state politics fighting liberals in his party is now championing the "Democratic wing of the Democratic Party." In Vermont, Dean was popular in the business community because he made deals with them that alienated the state's environmentalists. Now, on the campaign trail, Dean rails against business and quipped in one interview that it's time to "reregulate" U.S. industry. As governor, Dean governed like Clinton—only to pronounce, in a recent, high-profile policy speech, that it was time to get past the "damage control" of the Clinton years.

But, however politically convenient in the Democratic primaries, those statements represent a logical updating of Clintonism rather than a rejection of it. For one thing, a primary rationale for Clintonism was to restore faith in government so future Democrats could put it to good use. As Clinton himself suggested in a November 2003 interview with *The American Prospect*'s Michael Tomasky, "Democrats ought to all pocket some of the gains I made." More important, Dean's modest departures make perfect sense given what has happened in the last few years. After all, what sane person familiar with Enron and other corporate scandals wouldn't argue for increasing the regulation of business?

Besides, after three years of President Bush, it would

JIM BOURG/REUTERS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

take a great deal of "reregulation" just to restore corporate accountability to its Clinton-era levels. As *Fast Food Nation* author Eric Schlosser pointed out recently in *The New York Times*, the Bush administration official assuring the country about the safety of the nation's beef supply last week was none other than a former beef-industry lobbyist. And that's just one example of how far Bush has moved politics to the right. Undermining Social Security to finance tax cuts for the wealthy, turning Medicare into a voucher program, subjecting regulations to cost-benefit analyses that favor industry—these ideas were all dismissed as radically conservative when Newt Gingrich included them in the Contract With America. Now they are law or on the way to becoming it. In other words, Dean's not the extremist. Bush is.

For all their attendant controversy, Dean's pronouncements on foreign policy fall into the same category: They seem radical only if the policies of the Bush administration count as mainstream, which they aren't. True, the case for a radical departure in foreign policy is greater than in domestic policy: Our understanding of the world really did change on September 11, 2001. But the question is not whether the United States should adapt to the post–September 11 world, but how—and here Dean's vision is more sensible than his angry tones might imply. Dean is certainly prepared to use military force to defend U.S. interests: He says he supported every major U.S. foreign policy intervention since Vietnam except the Iraq war. (That includes the first Gulf war, a conflict Dick Gephardt and John Kerry opposed.) Dean's caricature as a peacenik is a product mostly of the fallacious argument that opposing the Iraq war was tantamount to always opposing the use of U.S. power abroad. In fact, it is perfectly reasonable to believe there are occasions for unilateral action while holding that ousting Saddam Hussein was not one of them—just as it is possible to argue that fighting Saddam soaked up resources that might have been spent pursuing Osama bin Laden or fortifying homeland security, both more essential to fighting terrorism. Dean has said all of these things.

A more valid criticism of Dean is that his interest in foreign policy just hasn't seemed that serious. But foreign policy is the one area where presidents—particularly those who were governors—reliably evolve. What's more important is a candidate's intelligence and leadership instincts, and here Dean has acquitted himself well. He showed far better judgment than his more seasoned Democratic opponents when he argued, in fall 2002, that Saddam's weapons weren't nearly the threat that Bush insisted they were. Dean's rivals could have been forgiven for accepting the administration's intelligence ruse if they had given the matter careful consideration. But, in the weeks leading up to the war vote, most Democrats were not interested in the kind of congressional scrutiny Iraq deserved; they were more interested in expediting a vote so it didn't interfere with the congressional elections. If willingness to insulate national security questions from politics is among the most essential qualities of a commander-in-chief, then Dean's claim to that characteristic seems, if anything, stronger than his rivals.

ALAS, FOR MANY Democrats it is Dean's electability—not his principles or policies—that keeps them awake at night. They think Dean will come off as too liberal, too Northern, too secular, too arrogant, too impulsive, and/or too inconsistent to win in a general election against Bush. Make no mistake: Many of these political liabilities are real. Right or wrong, Dean's position on the war still puts him at odds with the majority of voters. Nobody likes paying more taxes. And, while his repeated vows to woo white working-class voters by avoiding "abortion, guns, and God" suggest he's at least cognizant of his regional problem, the very existence of such statements suggests the difficulty of a solution. A candidate at ease with Southern voters wouldn't have to announce his intentions of communicating. He would just communicate.

But the case for Dean needn't be that his liabilities are nonexistent; it is that, relative to his rivals, Dean's assets are stronger than his liabilities. Geographically speaking, the South may be a lost cause for any Democrat. But, between his fluent Spanish and popularity with high-tech workers, Dean could have unusually strong appeal in the Southwest and Pacific Northwest; polls already show he is popular in these areas. Along with Kerry, Dean is the only Democratic candidate to refuse campaign matching funds from the federal government, which means he can raise and spend money after the primaries—in the months-long interregnum while Bush is spending the $200 million or so he'll raise for that purpose.

Then there are the legions of supporters, many of them young, new voters, who Dean brings to his cause. Dean's absence from the ticket wouldn't lead these people to support Bush, but it likely means they wouldn't donate money or their time—no matter how hard Dean exhorts them. Given the way Dean and his campaign Svengali, Joe Trippi, have revolutionized politics by their use of the Internet, it's at least possible that they could turn 2004 into one of those rare, once-in-a-lifetime elections that witnesses a mass influx of new voters (like 1828 or 1936). But you don't have to believe in such far-fetched scenarios to see how Dean's unique organizational strength—hundreds if not thousands of groups of Dean supporters, who meet via the Internet—could bring in a few thousand extra votes here and there, tipping a close election.

Dean critics dismiss the power of Dean's activists; in this weekend's debate, for example, Joe Lieberman pleaded for a "center-out" coalition. But, in the real world, that's not how politics works. Moderates aren't the ones who man the phones or walk the precincts or start their own Web logs—they're not passionate enough to devote the time. It's the activists who do that, which is why alienating them is every bit as self-destructive as letting them take charge. The key is finding some middle ground, and that's the beauty of the Dean campaign, as my colleague Noam Scheiber has observed: Dean has won over Democratic activists more with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tone than substance. He has tapped radical energy without committing the party to a radical agenda. In fact, Dean may yet move a bit right on taxes and foreign policy—proposing middle-class tax relief that doesn't inflate the deficit, then attacking Bush for neglecting homeland defense while coddling the Saudis—just as soon as he has taken care of primary challenges from the left.

That's not to say it will be easy. Part of Dean's unorthodox appeal is his willingness to take unpopular stands, which conveys an image of principle. If Dean has one clear strength over his rivals, it's that he grasps how taking occasional risks—saying something controversial or attempting to lead public opinion rather than follow it—can be a more viable political strategy than trying desperately never to stray far from majority views. But running as a "straight-talk" candidate carries its own hazards. More than most candidates, Dean can ill afford to seem transparently political. What's more, because of Dean's self-professed honesty, the media is growing obsessed with trivial rhetorical contradictions, which Dean makes almost daily. Plus, the whole argument rests on the assumption that voters will overlook modest differences in policy for a leader they like and trust. It has certainly worked that way for other candidates—most recently, Bush in 2000—but it remains to be seen whether Dean's bedside manner has the same appeal.

Then again, no Democrat in this race has an easy path to victory in November. Perhaps that's why a new *Time*/CNN poll actually showed Dean running the closest to Bush of any Democrat, losing by just six points—51 to 46. A few weeks ago, Republican strategist Vin Weber offered this assessment of Dean: He seems like the easiest to beat on paper, but he is also the biggest wild card. That's about right. If Dean has the most potential to lose big, he also has the most potential to shake up the race and pull an upset. That's not a reason to vote for him, perhaps, but it's also not a reason to vote against him—particularly if his case is otherwise strong. And it is. ■

Campaign Journal

The Puzzle

BY RYAN LIZZA

It's Junior High Night at Dean for America's Des Moines headquarters, housed in some nondescript office space downtown. In the volunteer center, a half-dozen kids, many wearing braces, sit around a brown folding table and frantically work the phones, trying to persuade Iowans to caucus for Dean on January 19. Dean volunteers have a reputation for being young, but, for the most part, these kids will be ineligible to vote not only in this year's election but in the 2008 election as well. Sasha Smith and Drew Daumueller, both 13, methodically work through a page of Iowa names. Sasha is here to get some after-school credit; Drew is here because he saw so many Dean commercials on television that he thought it would be cool to go work for the guy. Their task—like that of the volunteers directly across Locust Avenue at John Edwards's office, and the ones half a block away at John Kerry's headquarters, and the others around the state at dozens of regional offices for the five candidates competing here—is to find the most coveted thing in Iowa right now: a "one." "I got one one," Sasha says. "I got two ones," adds Drew.

Next to each name on their call sheets are five numbered boxes. An Iowan counts as a one, according to a sheet of paper explaining the codes, if he or she "is 100 percent positive they will caucus for Dean on Jan. 19th. A person is only a one if they have signed the commit card and are completely positive about caucusing." People merely leaning toward Dean are twos. Mushy undecideds are threes. And those leaning toward or committed to another candidate are fours and fives, respectively. Add up all the ones and you get your "hard count," the total number of Iowans definitely supporting your candidate and the most tightly held secret in every campaign.

I watch some of the young Deaniacs try to turn threes and fours into ones. In front of them, each caller has a two-page "persuasion script" that explains the secret of selling Dean over the phone to undecided Iowans. The script calls for the volunteer to deliver a tough version of the Dean stump speech:

> "Governor Dean is running for president to stand up to George Bush and take back our country. His opponents are going after him with negative attacks designed to confuse people. All they can do is attack, because, while Governor Dean was standing up to George Bush, they were surrendering to him in Washington. They surrendered when they gave George Bush a blank check in Iraq and when they passed his No Child Left Behind Act. And, while Governor Dean was ensuring health care for every child in Vermont, his opponents were spinning their wheels in Washington."

If this still doesn't persuade the Iowan on the other end of the line, the script offers a section titled "Tips" to strengthen the message. "People are sick of hearing about the caucus," it notes. "Empathize. Share your frustration. Tell them your story. Tell them why you dropped everything and are sleeping on a floor in Iowa to make Howard Dean president." Of course, empathy doesn't always work. Sometimes you need to be a little tougher. That's when you move on to the script under the heading: "If they get pissed and try to cut you off or hang-up." The way to deal with a pissed-off Iowan is to push back. "Assertively tell your story," the persuasion script counsels.

Sasha and Drew are a little too polite to argue with the non-Dean supporters. But, a few feet away, a Dean staffer in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a green union shirt who looks to be in his twenties but won't tell me his age—"My name's Josh Tucker. Unfortunately, that's all I can tell you"—has the method down. He tears through his calls, making the case for Dean with an intensity that has the same angry edge as his candidate. When he finds a three, four, or five, he seems almost disgusted with them. He races through three main points, shouting into the phone, rarely taking a breath. First, he explains the Dean fund-raising phenomenon. "One of the main reasons I think Howard can win this is that he's raised more money than any Democrat in history," Josh says. That's important because, when he's elected, Dean will only "be accountable to the people." The Iowan still seems to be listening, so Josh dives into a well-honed discourse on how the other candidates are Bush Lite, seemingly adapted from the persuasion script. "A lot of the Democrats that are running for president, they voted for the war in Iraq," he says, sounding sickened. "They voted for No Child Left Behind that is gutting our school systems. They stood by while George Bush took money away from Social Security, and even this latest bill, the Medicare bill, it's really a giveaway to the large corporations." It's not really clear what those last two points have to do with Dick Gephardt, Kerry, and Edwards, all of whom opposed the Bush tax cuts and the Medicare bill, but the whole point of the exercise is to blur the differences between Bush and Dean's rivals. "It's hard for them to say that they would do things differently than George Bush because they haven't been doing things differently. Howard? Howard, he has. He provided health care for everyone under one hundred fifty percent of poverty in Vermont." Click. The Iowan has abruptly ended the call. Josh hangs up the phone. I ask how it went. "It went well," he says. "I think you got to just keep on keeping on."

DEAN'S LOVABLE PRESS secretary, Tricia Enright, takes me next door to what the Dean campaign calls "the Storm Center." For months, the Dean campaign has been urging its supporters from across the country to descend on Iowa for the final weeks of the campaign here, and the Storm Center is where all these volunteers are organized. (The campaign originally set a goal of 5,000 volunteers, but that's been dialed back to around 3,000.) The Storm is broken up into four "waves," each lasting three to seven days; when one wave has completed its commitment, the next blows into town to replace it a few days later. This weekend, the campaign expects 800 new arrivals for the penultimate wave known as "Gathering Storm." (The final wave, taking place from January 16 to 20, will be called "Perfect Storm.") Naturally, Stormers sign up on the Dean website, where they can arrange to share rides with others ("Eastern shore of MD, but will pick up anywhere along route to Iowa. VW Golf," reads a typical entry).

Enright takes me upstairs at the Storm Center. One homemade sign depicts Bush leading the United States into battle against North Korea and Syria. A bumper sticker reads, SOMEWHERE IN TEXAS, A VILLAGE IS MISSING ITS IDIOT. Enright tries unsuccessfully to get some of the Stormers to show me around. Puzzled by their reluctance, she inquires, "What, were you guys told never to talk to the press?" A chorus of "uh-huh" and "yeah" is returned.

Eventually, Adam Mordecai, a 28-year-old Dean staffer who was shipped out from the New York office to help run the Iowa blog, offers to explain the system. Once in Iowa, Stormers are housed throughout the state in "winterized camps," which offer cabin-like accommodations that are halfway between a hotel room and a tent. "We've tested out the locations ourselves and can vouch for their quality!" the campaign website promises. When one wave of Stormers is getting ready to leave, they call the incoming Stormers to help psyche them up for their turn. "Everyone gets a free orange hat for democracy," says Mordecai, "and then they blog about why they are coming for the Storm and why it makes a difference."

Cecilia Hayford—"'hay' like the plant you feed to a cow, 'ford' like the truck"—explains that she's 18 and drove 1,000 miles from Virginia to help Dean convert fours into ones and get those ones to the caucuses on January 19. She's staying near Indianola, ten miles outside Des Moines, at a camp that houses Girl Scouts during the summer. "[The cabins] are not as warm as being really inside, but they are much, much warmer than being outside," she testifies. I ask if she and the other volunteers are at all worried about the savvy labor guys streaming into the state for Dick Gephardt, Dean's closest rival. "They are not as dedicated as us," Hayford says. "They wouldn't live in a Girl Scout camp."

SHE'S RIGHT. RECENTLY, about 300 Teamsters, Seafarers, Ironworkers, and members from the other 18 unions backing Gephardt arrived in Iowa for the final two weeks of the campaign. Most arrived by plane and are staying in hotels. These folks are generally the most politically active organizers from locals around the country. For every Cecilia Hayford working for Dean, there seems to be a Tina Anderson working for Gephardt. Anderson is a 56-year-old UPS driver who has been a Teamster for 30 years. While Hayford bundles up at the winterized camp, Anderson sleeps at the Four Points Sheraton; while the Deaniacs are here over their college winter breaks, Anderson is using vacation time she has saved up from work.

The same night that Sasha and Drew ring up twos and threes at Dean headquarters, Tina is at her hotel phoning union members that she canvassed during the day—the assumption being that having union members speak directly to other union members is the best way to make them into Gephardt "ones." "If you want to compare his college kids and our union folks," says Brett Voorhies of the Alliance for Economic Justice (a sort of mini-AFL-CIO formed by the unions backing Gephardt), "the advantage we have is union members talking to union members. When you have a steelworker talking to a steelworker, you can't beat that."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This intense competition between Dean and Gephardt is shaping up as a battle between a guerrilla movement and a regular army. "The twentysomethings," says Gephardt's state director John Lapp, unknowingly exaggerating the age of many of Dean's volunteers, "are great. The Dean swarm, that's a wonderful thing for them to come in from out of this state, but Iowans are going to decide this." The Gephardt team delights in tweaking the young Deaniacs. "They are housing them in these winterized Girl Scout camps," says Steve Murphy, who ran Iowa in 1988, when Gephardt won the state. "We're busing people in, too. The only difference is ... we're putting them in individual precincts." Ultimately, he says, the difference will be that "we're the best-organized."

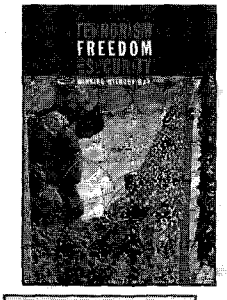
It's a political cliché that the best-organized campaign wins, but in this case it's probably true. More than any other state, Iowa is a test of organizational prowess. At their core, the caucuses are really just a giant mathematical puzzle.

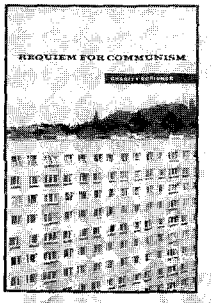
SOLVING THAT PUZZLE begins with a giant database stored on a file server in Rhode Island. That's the home of the "IDP VAN," the Iowa Democratic Party's Voter Activation Network™. The VAN includes a list of all 1.8 million registered voters in the state and, most important, the 105,000 Iowans known to have attended a Democratic caucus between 1980 and 2000. All the serious campaigns bought the list from the state party for $65,000, most of them in the winter of 2002 or spring of 2003.

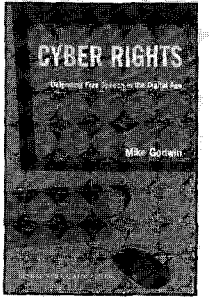
The next important piece of the puzzle was delivered last July. Every four years, the number of Democratic delegates allotted to each of Iowa's 1,993 precincts is determined based on its share of the Democratic vote within its county in the last couple of general elections: The more Democratic the precinct, the more delegates it is allotted. It's the election of these delegates—13,490 in all, or an average of about seven per precinct—that is the purpose of the January 19 caucuses.

The July document shows how many delegates every precinct will get and is crucial to developing a caucus strategy. "Gephardt seemed to be the one campaign that understood the importance of that document and focused on it right away," says Jean Hessburg, the state party's executive director. It's just another scrap of evidence that suggests the advantage Gephardt's team has in having done all this before. "Most other campaigns had to go through a get-acquainted period," explains Murphy.

With a list of caucusgoers to target, and an understanding of the exact number of delegates each precinct caucus will elect, each campaign can then figure out a "hard-count" goal for every precinct in the state—that is, the number of "ones" they will need in each precinct in order







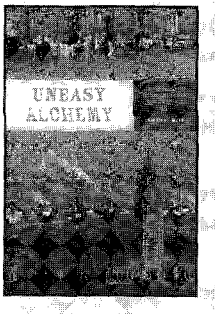
Terrorism, Freedom, and Security
Winning Without War
Philip B. Heymann
"Heymann . . . has reminded us that we must not forfeit our democratic values in defense of our democracy." — Rand Beers, Senior Director for Combating Terrorism, National Security Council, 2002-2003
"An essential foundation for the public debate we must have about the costs and benefits of alternative strategies for combating terrorism."
— Martha Crenshaw, Wesleyan University
160 pp. $24.95

Requiem for Communism
Charity Scribner
"A genuinely wide ranging study of post-Wall Eastern and Western Europe, full of fresh juxtapositions and new insights." — Katie Trumpener, Yale University
320 pp., 39 illus. $34.95

now in paperback
Cyber Rights
Defending Free speech in the Digital Age
Mike Godwin
"*Cyber Rights* is a book for any champion of the rights of the little guy." — *Dr. Dobb's Journal*
416 pp. $21.95 paper

New from The MIT Press

Uneasy Alchemy
Citizens and Experts in Louisiana's Chemical Corridor Disputes
Barbara L. Allen
"A compelling analysis of one of this nation's legendary toxic zones."
— Sheldon Krimsky, Tufts University, author of *Science in the Private Interest*
224 pp., 23 illus. $22 paper



now in paperback
Beyond Our Control?
Confronting the Limits of Our Legal System in the Age of Cyberspace
Stuart Biegel
"A study of Internet law that leaves no stone in cyberspace unturned."
— *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology*
466 pp. $19.95 paper

To order call **800-405-1619**.
Prices subject to change without notice.
http://mitpress.mit.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to win delegates there. This is where the Ouija boards come into play, because coming up with an accurate hard-count goal requires a projection of what turnout will be at each precinct. In 1980, Ted Kennedy's aides were gleeful because at pre-caucus meetings at precinct after precinct they were achieving their hard-count goals. The problem was that, on caucus night itself, turnout was some 50 percent higher than they had projected, and Jimmy Carter crushed them. Like the hard count, each campaign's turnout projection is a tightly held secret. The most talked-about variable this year is whether or not the legions of new Dean supporters who have never caucused before will actually show up. Most campaigns assume there will be record turnout. "We based our targets on a turnout that is higher than is even remotely realistic," says Murphy, who worked for Kennedy in Iowa in 1980 and knows firsthand the damage that overly conservative projections can cause. "I'm not going to give you the numbers, but it's twenty or thirty percent higher than anything that will realistically happen."

THE OTHER CRUCIAL variable in the Iowa caucuses is "viability." A caucus is an anachronism in U.S. politics, a throwback to the days before the secret ballot became sacrosanct. Caucus attendees publicly declare their support for a candidate by physically organizing themselves into presidential preference groups. But, if a group doesn't contain at least 15 percent of the total attendees at that meeting, it's not considered viable, and members of that group must realign with a group that is.

This rule obviously has a tremendous impact on a candidates' strategy, both in terms of how they organize for the caucuses and what they do on caucus night itself. For a candidate struggling in the back of the pack, the best chance of winning delegates is in smaller precincts, where hitting 15 percent takes fewer bodies. This is one reason John Edwards spends so much time with small groups of potential caucusgoers in rural parts of the state. Also, since the delegates themselves are awarded on a proportional basis within each precinct, it takes fewer bodies to win each delegate in a sparsely attended caucus.

As the caucuses near, the candidates are starting to hone their strategies to take advantage of this viability rule. For instance, it was not lost on a lot of Iowa Democrats last week when a very savvy Dean answered a question at *The Des Moines Register* debate about a mistake he has learned from by mentioning how apologetic he is for once falsely accusing Edwards of flip-flopping on his war vote. Dean was making a play for all those Edwards supporters who will have to align with another candidate on caucus night once their group is declared nonviable.

The viability threshold creates interesting strategic opportunities. If a group of Gephardt supporters isn't viable, should they caucus with Edwards or Kerry instead, since those two men may be less of a threat than Dean? "That's probably the million dollar question," laughs Voorhies, who organizes Gephardt supporters. Officially, the campaigns don't admit to employing this kind of strategy and argue that it's too difficult to pull off statewide anyway. I asked Pat Lynch, a Teamster who is in charge of caucus-training for the unions backing Gephardt, where he would send the representative's supporters if they don't hit viability. "Probably to the undecided delegate group," he says, noting that "uncommitted" is an option on caucus night. (Delegates elected by a viable, uncommitted group can commit to a candidate at a later date.) "We don't want to give anybody the opportunity to take away any more delegates. That's part of the strategy you need to work out. Every campaign out there would use more or less the same procedure."

Since delegates are won proportionally, even when a candidate's group is viable, a similar strategy can be employed with "wasted" supporters. Jean Hessburg offers as an example a caucus where every nine additional members in a group gains one more delegate for that group's candidate. "Say the precinct elects three delegates," she explains. "I see that my group of people has enough to get two delegates, but I have three extra people in my group. ... Do I try and get six more people to get an extra delegate, or do I take those three extra people and send them over to candidate B, which is the person I know won't challenge me the most, or will hurt my closest challenger?"

But, since the race is still far more fluid here than conventional wisdom suggests—polling for caucuses is notoriously inaccurate, the percentage of undecided voters is still high, and talk about Kerry and Edwards catching fire persists—many of these micro-level strategic decisions can't be made until the final days of the campaign. For now, each campaign is methodically drilling away at meeting its hard-count goals, precinct by precinct.

And that brings us back to the VAN. Each night, after the UPS drivers, junior high kids, and all the other volunteers and staffers furiously contacting potential caucusgoers and defining them on the one-to-five scale are finished, that data is uploaded to Rhode Island. In fact, every time a voter is contacted, it is noted in the VAN. The campaigns even include notes about their conversations with the voters they contacted, and they customize their VAN interface to include fields for whatever demographic or ideological characteristics they want to record for each voter.

Right now, each candidate's data is protected from his rivals by a firewall. But the genius of the way Iowa Democrats are organizing is that, once the caucuses are over and the winner is settled, the firewall will come down, and all the data will be consolidated into one file again. In essence, what is happening right now in Iowa is that all the campaigns, though competing with each other, are really working together to create an extraordinarily rich database about Iowa voters that the Democratic nominee will use in the general election. If the story ends happily for Democrats, come November Teamster and college student will then work together to beat Bush in Iowa. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Black Listed Cancer Treatment Could Save Your Life

Baltimore, MD— As unbelievable as it seems the key to stopping many cancers has been around for over 30 years. Yet it has been banned. Blocked. And kept out of your medicine cabinet by the very agency designed to protect your health—the FDA.

In 1966, the senior oncologist at a prominent New York hospital rocked the medical world when he developed a serum that **"shrank cancer tumors in 45 minutes!"** 90 minutes later they were gone... Headlines hit every major paper around the world. Scientists and researchers applauded. Time and again this life saving treatment worked miracles, but the FDA ignored the research and hope he brought and shut him down.

You read that right. He was not only shut down—but also forced out of the country where others benefited from his discovery. That was 37 years ago. How many other treatments have they been allowed to hide? Just as in the case of Dr. Burton's miracle serum these too go unmentioned.

Two-Nutrient Cancer Breakthrough...

Decades ago, European research scientist Dr. Johanna Budwig, a six-time Nobel Award nominee, discovered a totally natural formula that not only protects against the development of cancer, but people all over the world who have been diagnosed with incurable cancer and sent home to die have actually benefited from her research—and now lead normal lives.

After 30 years of study, Dr. Budwig discovered that the blood of seriously ill cancer patients was deficient in certain substances and nutrients. Yet, healthy blood always contained these ingredients. It was the lack of these nutrients that allowed cancer cells to grow wild and out of control.

By simply eating a combination of two natural and delicious foods (found on page 134) not only can cancer be prevented—but in case after case it was actually healed! "Symptoms of cancer, liver dysfunction, and diabetes were completely alleviated." Remarkably, what Dr. Budwig discovered was a totally natural way for eradicating cancer.

However, when she went to publish these results so that everyone could benefit—**she was blocked by manufacturers with heavy financial stakes!** For over 10 years now her methods have proved effective—yet she is denied publication—blocked by the giants who don't want you to read her words.

What's more, the world is full of expert minds like Dr. Budwig who have pursued cancer remedies and come up with remarkable natural formulas and diets that work for hundreds and thousands of patients. *How to Fight Cancer & Win* author William Fischer has studied these methods and revealed their secrets for you—so that you or someone you love may be spared the horrors of conventional cancer treatments.

As early as 1947, Virginia Livingston, M.D., isolated a cancer-causing microbe. She noted that every cancer sample analyzed (whether human or other animal) contained it.

This microbe—a bacteria that is actually in each of us from birth to death—multiplies and promotes cancer when the immune system is weakened by disease, stress, or poor nutrition. Worst of all, the microbes secrete a special hormone protector that short-circuits our body's immune system—allowing the microbes to grow undetected for years. No wonder so many patients are riddled with cancer by the time it is detected. But there is hope even for them...

Six-time Nobel Nominee's Two-Nutrient Cancer Breakthrough Revealed

Turn to page 82 of *How to Fight Cancer & Win* for the delicious diet that can help stop the formation of cancer cells and shrink tumors.

They walked away from traditional cancer treatments...and were healed! Throughout the pages of *How to Fight Cancer & Win* you'll meet real people who were diagnosed with cancer—suffered through harsh conventional treatments—turned their backs on so called modern medicine—only to be miraculously healed by natural means! Here is just a sampling of what others have to say about the book.

"We purchased *How to Fight Cancer & Win*, and immediately my husband started following the recommended diet for his just diagnosed colon cancer. He refused the surgery that our doctors advised. Since following the regime recommended in the book he has had no problems at all, cancer-wise. If not cured, we believe the cancer has to be in remission."

—Thelma B.

"I bought *How to Fight Cancer & Win* and this has to be the greatest book I've ever read. I have had astounding results from the easy to understand knowledge found in this book. My whole life has improved drastically and I have done so much for many others. The information goes far beyond the health thinking of today."

—Hugh M.

"I can't find adequate words to describe my appreciation of your work in providing *How to Fight Cancer & Win*. You had to do an enormous amount of research to bring this vast and most important knowledge to your readers.

My doctor found two tumors on my prostate with a high P.S.A. He scheduled a time to surgically remove the prostate, but I canceled the appointment. Instead I went on the diet discussed in the book combined with another supplement. Over the months my P.S.A. has lowered until the last reading was one point two."

—Duncan M.

"In my 55 years as a Country Family Physician, I have never read a more 'down to earth,' practical resume of cancer prevention and treatments, than in this book. It needs to be studied worldwide for the prevention of cancer by all researchers who are looking for a cure."

—Edward S.,M.D.

"As a cancer patient who has been battling lymphatic cancer on and off for almost three years now, I was very pleased to stumble across *How to Fight Cancer & Win*. The book was inspiring, well-written and packed with useful information for any cancer patient looking to maximize his or her chances for recovery."

—Romany S.

"I've been incorporating Dr. Budwig's natural remedy into my diet and have told others about it. Your book is very informative and has information I've never heard about before (and I've read many books on the cancer and nutrition link). Thanks for the wonderful information."

—Molly G.

Don't waste another minute. There are only a limited number of books in stock—and unless order volume is extraordinarily high we may not be able to print more life-saving copies. Claim your book today and you will be one of the lucky few who no longer have to wait for cures that get pushed "underground" by big business and money hungry giants.

To get your copy of *How to Fight Cancer & Win* visit our website at www.agorahealthbooks.com/nrep7 or call **1-888-821-3609 and ask for code P6E13** to order by credit card. Or write "Fight Cancer—Dept. P6E13" on a plain piece of paper with your name, address, phone number (in case we have a question about your order) and a check for $19.95 plus $5.00 shipping and mail to:

Agora Health Books
Dept. P6E13
P.O. Box 925
Frederick, MD 21705-9838

If you are not completely satisfied, return the book within one year for a complete and total refund—no questions asked. This will probably be the most important information you and your loved ones receive—so order today!

©2003 Agora Health Books, LLC

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

An Odyssey

YES, THIS IS STILL ANOTHER trillion-dollar rendering of a successful novel, washed our way on a tidal wave of hype, but **COLD MOUNTAIN** is not a damp letdown after a windy buildup. At least it has enough authenticity that it can almost scoff at the fact that it cost a lot and that there has been raucous advance whooping. It is not the film that it needed to be, yet it is not just another attempt to wrench more bucks from a successful book.

Charles Frazier's novel told the story of Inman, a Confederate deserter who, sickened of war after the massacre of Petersburg in 1864, made his tortuous and dangerous way from Virginia to his village of Cold Mountain in western North Carolina. More than three hundred miles, mostly on foot. Braided through this journey are scenes of the Cold Mountain life from which he had come, of Ada Monroe, the woman to whom he is trudging back, and of Ada's own hardships that she is now enduring as she waits for *him*—waits even though there has been no answer to her letters. This then is an odyssey, one in which the account of this Ulysses's journey keeps Penelope present. It is a drama of juncture. The viewers become superior beings watching two mortals moving toward reunion.

One reward of the book for me was the ring of its small details, the matters that historical novels often skimp. When I read on page eight "he ate his breakfast of boiled oats and butter," that minute fact sealed the verity of the opening pages—the wounded Inman's thoughts as he lies in his hospital bed. Anthony Minghella, who adapted the book for the screen and then directed, seemed to understand that lamps and buckles and shoes and grub were what would help to take his film out of the Civil War–movie business and make it breathe with factuality. Minghella can't succeed in this as the book does, but the presence of this aim in his mind helps the picture a good deal.

The war scenes at the beginning are more than routine action sequences. Mathew Brady's photographs of the aftermath of Civil War battles are unforgettably painful; Minghella, aided by his editor Walter Murch, provides the action that led to the awful stillness of those Brady pictures. John Seale's camera, here and throughout, uses a palette that keeps each color true without becoming colorful, thus respecting the Petersburg horror.

Inman's homeward journey, like all odysseys, is a series of episodes. Inevitably they vary in interest. The goat-woman sequence is interesting only because of Eileen Atkins's performance as an eccentric hermit. The scene with a young mother, alone with her baby, who takes Inman into her bed solely for company, is an arty affectation, yet this sequence ends with a raid by Yankee soldiers that pulls the film back down into grit. But as against Inman's episodic adventures, the Penelope sequences (let's call them) compose a narrative. Ada, reared as a delicate lady in Charleston, is suddenly left to manage a large farm when her clergyman father dies, and in her incompetence she nears starvation. Suddenly a husky and knowledgeable young country woman named Ruby arrives to stay and help. (Ruby is the one character who seems a writer's invention.) The two women—and the whole area—are plagued by the Home Guard, bounty hunters looking for deserters, and additionally Ada has a suitor, a powerful man whom she detests but who keeps pressing.

As others have noted, a gross blank in the story is the subject of slavery. Although we see a few black people, the relevance of slavery to the war is never mentioned. Thus these Southern characters, who presumably accept slavery, are kept unestranged from us today.

Minghella's directing shows a fine graphic sense but, moment by moment, the realism of what we see has a paradoxical effect: it keeps reminding us that the whole is less than the parts. The film is not up to the quality of its details. In part this is due to a sore fault in Minghella's screenplay. Inman, as a character, is a nullity. Frazier's novel takes us into the depths of Inman even before the story begins. That does not happen at the start here nor anywhere in the picture. He is just a young man, taciturn, reserved, who fell in love, went to war, was wounded, and now wants to go home. He could be anyone, unlike the particularized Inman of the novel. Ada is much more fully drawn, a young lady whose ethics—an aspect of the antebellum South presumably drawn from England—ordained that she be able to do nothing more than be ladylike.

But there is a further damaging flaw in Minghella's treatment of these two people, not in his screenplay but in his directing. Through all the events sketched above—and there are of course a great many more in this 155-minute picture—Inman and Ada are not sufficiently appealing or affecting. With Inman, as noted, this is in some degree because the screenplay does not develop his character, but that trouble is increased by Jude Law, who plays the part. On past evidence, Law would not have gotten very far within Inman even if Stephen Crane had written the screenplay. Law is an earnest enough actor but shallow. With Ada, the matter is even worse. She is in fact adequately written, but she is played by Nicole Kidman.

One of the most inflated critical estimates today is the palaver about Kidman. We are told that she is a wonderfully gifted artist, as proved by her versatility. Hollywood has already held a huge banquet, just a mite prematurely, to celebrate her career. To me, her versatility is more of a managerial coup than an artistic achievement. She has played a num-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ber of quite different roles, but not always or often played them well. Sometimes, admittedly, she has struck through to conviction: her performance in *Eyes Wide Shut* was true and moving. But often—a few instances—as the prole in *The Human Stain*, as Virginia Woolf in *The Hours*, as the cabaret diva in *Moulin Rouge*, as the siren in *The Blue Room* on Broadway, she has done an imitation of acting rather than the authentic thing. Now here is *Cold Mountain*, which depended heavily on a credible Ada, and Kidman disappoints. Her pretty face has never seemed more petty, her voice more limited. While I was watching Law and Kidman, I allowed myself to remember Henry Fonda and Olivia de Havilland. It doesn't matter that they are no longer available: they still exist as criteria.

Renée Zellweger pitches in with fabricated lustiness as Ruby, and at least she does not signally impair the film. (The distended role of her fiddler father could have been reduced—or dropped—without harm.) But, at the last, this picture is an odd misadventure: a gigantic enterprise that, despite some quite exceptional filming, is thwarted by its two leading actors. ■

Joseph Frank
Liberties

PUSHKIN: A BIOGRAPHY
By T. J. Binyon
(Alfred A. Knopf, 727 pp., $35)

IN THIS NEW LIFE OF PUSHKIN, T. J. Binyon leaves the reader in no doubt as to the chief aim of his massive work. He begins with a brief preface, detailing the meteoric rise of the poet's reputation from the very first public knowledge of his youthful compositions, its temporary decline during the mid-nineteenth century, and its restoration culminating in the dedication of a monument to him in Moscow in June 1880. This occasion was marked by a celebration lasting for several days and by numerous speeches from attending literary celebrities, the most famous being an address by Dostoevsky. Boldly asserting that Pushkin was, as Gogol had said, "an extraordinary, and perhaps unique manifestation of the Russian spirit," Dostoevsky claimed that his "universal responsiveness," his ability to embody himself in characters of other nationalities, remains unrivaled elsewhere in world literature; and he thus foreshadowed the great historical task of the Russian spirit, which was to unite all nations into "a final brotherly agreement in accordance with the law of Christ's Gospel."

The speech created a sensation. Though very little in Pushkin's work corresponds to such a reading, it was from this time on that he became more than a poet. He assumed the stature of "a symbol, a myth, an icon," whose work was utilized for the most diverse purposes. Both the tsarist empire and the Soviets used him for their ends; and the post-Soviet Bank of Russia issued a coin with a picture of Pushkin holding a goose-quill with portraits of his personages in the background. Even Coca-Cola "ran an advertisement featuring lines from his most famous love lyric." The aim of Binyon's book is to break with these various exploitations of the poet's image, and to synthesize the vast amount of Russian scholarship that has exhaustively explored every aspect of Pushkin's life. He wishes "to free the complex and interesting figure of Pushkin the man from the heroic simplicity of Pushkin the myth." This estimable purpose is carried out with impeccable scholarship, extending far beyond Pushkin's personal life and including not only his friends and acquaintances, but also the epoch in which he lived.

Those interested in Pushkin's work, however, will have to look elsewhere. "Literary analysis has been eschewed," Binyon writes, "as being the province of the critic rather than the biographer." Such a sharp separation between the life and work may very well be disputed. The best examples of literary biography combine the two; and presumably our interest in the life of an important literary figure is prompted by a desire to better understand the work. Why concern oneself with the life of a writer if not as a means of obtaining additional insight into his or her creations? To limit one's perspective in this way, as Binyon does, is to impose restrictions that hardly enable a foreign reader, unfamiliar with Pushkin's writings known to most Russians from their schooldays, to understand the reason why he has become a "myth" at all. One also misses any attempt to evoke the quality or the timbre of Pushkin's poetry, as was done in 1926, for example, in D. S. Mirsky's vivacious little book—and done so well that it inspired Edmund Wilson to learn Russian.

Not that Pushkin's poetry is entirely absent. His works are of course mentioned, briefly summarized, and often cited to illustrate one or another biographical point; every chapter begins with an epigraph taken from his poetry—but very little more. The translations that Binyon offers are his own, and literally accurate, but in three citations here I have used others that attempt to capture some of the vibrancy and the nonchalant elegance of Pushkin's language. But there is no point in dwelling further on a book that Binyon chose not to write; let us turn instead to the quite valuable one that he did write.

PUSHKIN WAS BORN INTO A FAMily which, to say the least, provided him with a mixed heritage. On his father's side he could trace his ancestry back to the boyar class, the feudal aristocracy that had ruled Russia until Peter the Great created a new service nobility in the eighteenth century. On his mother's side he was the descendent of a far more exotic strain, a Negro child brought back from Constantinople by a Russian ambassador there, given as a present to Peter, and then adopted by the monarch. The boy was baptized with Peter as his godfather, educated as an army officer, and spent a number of years in France at a military school; eventually, he took the name of Gannibal (Hannibal). He had a distinguished military career, produced seven children by a second wife, and Pushkin's mother was the daughter of one of his sons. The poet was proud of both lineages, alluding to one boyar ancestor in his play *Boris Godunov* and leaving an unfinished story, *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great*, based on

Joseph Frank is professor emeritus of comparative literature and Slavic languages and literature at Stanford University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the rather remarkable life of his African forbear.

From his very earliest years Pushkin was surrounded by an extremely cultivated and literary atmosphere. Although his father was a ne'er-do-well, not looking after his estates at all, he had a taste for French literature, and was an inveterate theatergoer, reading Molière to his children. Pushkin's uncle Vasily had a reputation as a minor poet, and some of the leading literary lights of the day—Nikolay Karamzin, Vasily Zhukovsky, Konstantin Batyushkov—were visitors to the Pushkin residence. There is a tradition that the six-year-old Alexander left his toys to listen with rapt attention to a conversation between his father and Karamzin; but Binyon refuses to take it too literally. All the same, there is no doubt that at seven the childish Pushkin stayed awake at night writing poems, and he created comedies in French at the age of ten (French was the language spoken in the home). After reading Voltaire's *La Henriade* a bit later, he produced a parody of it in six cantos.

PUSHKIN WAS AT FIRST EDUCATED by foreign tutors, who found him a recalcitrant pupil, and his family thus decided to send him to school. A new Imperial Lycée was about to open at Tsarskoe Selo to train young men for government service, and influential friends obtained his admission after he passed a cursory examination. The friendships made during Pushkin's years at the Lycée, between 1811 and 1817, proved to be very important for the burgeoning young poet, who had enjoyed very little family affection. Pushkin was not a particularly good student, but he became known for being able to produce poetic epigrams (some of them quite obscene) for any and every occasion, and he was nicknamed "the Frenchman" because of his encyclopedic knowledge of that country's literature. Two other poets among his classmates also took their place in the annals of Russian literature: Anton Delvig, who became Pushkin's closest friend all through his life, and Wilhelm Küchelbecker, who was exiled to Siberia for taking part in the Decembrist uprising. Although Binyon does not mention such matters, Küchelbecker may well have furnished some traits for the figure of Lensky, the young poet just home from Göttingen and full of German Romantic *Schwarmerei*, in *Eugene Onegin*, who is killed in a duel with Onegin.

Pushkin became known not only for his ability to turn out verses, but also for the impetuosity of his character and his sexual arousability. (As a fellow student wrote, "merely touching the hand of the person he was dancing with . . . caused his eyes to blaze, and he snorted and puffed, like an ardent stallion in a young herd.") Emperor Alexander I complained to the school authorities when Pushkin, in a dark corridor, mistook a lady-in-waiting of the empress for her maid and overwhelmed her with "indiscreet caresses." He was also rebuked for sending verses to a lady—whose husband had recently died, and who was two months pregnant—imagining himself in bed with her. Other types of poems as well came from his pen, and he began to publish in 1814, at the age of fifteen. Twenty-four poems were printed while he was still in the Lycée, all but one under pseudonyms.

The poem to which he signed his name, "Recollections in Tsarskoe Selo," was written on assignment for recital at the examination for his junior year. Among those present was the greatest poet of the preceding age, Gavriil Derzhavin, and Pushkin later described the excitement created by his attendance. He read his own poem "standing two paces away from Derzhavin . . . and when I reached the line where I mention Derzhavin's name, my adolescent voice broke, and my heart beat with intoxicating rapture." The older poet expressed his enthusiasm for the poem and said "that a second Derzhavin will appear in the world . . . he is Pushkin"; and Zhukovsky, after reading the poem, called Pushkin "the hope of our literature." From this time on his fame spread beyond the Lycée walls, and he was accepted as the uncontested rising star of the new generation of writers.

PUSHKIN GRADUATED AT THE AGE of eighteen and was assigned to a post in the Foreign Ministry. There is not a single reference in his letters to this nominal position, which he treated more or less as a sinecure; in answer to an inquiry about him, the head of the Lycée remarked "that he does nothing at the Ministry." He joined a society of writers who called themselves *Arzamas* (after a small town noted for nothing except its geese), whose aim was to make fun of another more solemn assemblage founded by Admiral Shishkov "to defend 'classical' forms of Russian against foreign infection."

At the same time Pushkin was also associating with others—officers in the Army and civil servants—who had been classmates or acquaintances and were deeply concerned with politics. Many had been with the Russian Army occupying Paris after the victory over Napoleon and, impressed by the greater freedoms enjoyed by their European counterparts, they had begun to organize for what became the abortive Decembrist revolt in December 1825. As Binyon writes, "a number of the Decembrists were his [Pushkin's] close friends . . . He frequented houses in which they held meetings; he shared many of the political views of their programs." His diary, for example, contains an entry reporting a morning spent in conversation with the twenty-three-year-old Pavel Pestel—an officer in the Chevalier Guards and later one of the leaders of the uprising—whom he calls "one of the most original minds I know."

Pushkin did not conceal his sympathies with those who refused to accept any longer the absolute despotism of the Tsarist regime. He ostentatiously paraded in the stalls of a theater with a picture of the murderer of the Duc de Berry that bore the inscription: "A Lesson for Tsars?" It was such bravado that led his more cautious friends to conclude that he was untrustworthy, and he was not invited to join any of the secret societies they were forming to take action.

His poetry of this period reveals what Binyon calls his "conservative liberalism," which was not anti-monarchical but required the monarch to respect his own laws. The poem "Liberty: An Ode," in which such sentiments were expressed, was not published in its entirety in Russia until 1906. Another poem, "The Country," denounces serfdom and contains the famous quatrain:

> Friends, shall I ever see my nation,
> freed, arise,
> And serfdom vanish at the tsar's
> command,
> And over freedom's fatherland a
> lovely dawn illuminate the skies.

Another poem was addressed to Petr Chaadaev, later an important philosopher but then an elegant officer with the reputation of a dandy, whom Pushkin had met while at Tsarskoe Selo and whose friendship he valued very highly. Chaadaev, a Freemason, had been initiated into the plans of the Decembrists

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but took no part in the actual events. The poem concludes:

> And Russia, from her slumbers torn,
> The ruins of autocracy
> Will with our names adorn.

None of these poems, as well as others mocking the police and censorship, were published, but samizdat is an old Russian tradition and, as one observer wrote, "there was scarcely a more or less literate ensign in the army who did not know them by heart."

As a framework for the depiction of Pushkin's life in St. Petersburg, Binyon uses the sparkling first chapter of *Eugene Onegin*. The stylish protagonist of Pushkin's great novel in verse, after carefully choosing the appropriate garb—the poet apologizes for being forced to use so many French words—indefatigably dashes from a French restaurant to the ballet, and then on to a fashionable ball. Much of Pushkin's time was spent in exactly the same manner, combined with the (more often than not) successful pursuit of youngish wives who had been married off to elderly dignitaries. He also frequented bordellos and contracted infections that, requiring him to remain at home in bed, apparently provided his only leisure time. He was then working on his first long poem, "Ruslan and Lyudmila," and one of his friends, reporting on its progress, remarks in a letter: "If he were to have three or more doses of clap, it would be in the bag."

Pushkin was an ardent gambler, staking and losing large sums that he could not afford and then borrowing to pay such debts of honor. He once lost the manuscript of his first volume of poems in this way, and publication was delayed until he could buy it back. Poor Dostoevsky never went that far! Pushkin was also quick to take umbrage at what he thought was any insult to his dignity, and acquired a reputation as a duelist. "Mr. Pushkin has duels every day," wrote the wife of Karamzin; "thank God, not fatal, since the opponents always remain unharmed." Alas, this was not always to be the case, and one can only wonder at the poet capable of writing so feelingly about the death of Lensky, killed in a senseless duel over nothing, who nonetheless flared up at the slightest provocation and acquired a reputation for hair-trigger susceptibility.

An extreme obscurantism reigned in the last years of the rule of Alexander I, who had come under the influence of mystical and irrational currents of thought. The relative liberalism of a Pushkin poem such as "Liberty," not to mention the scurrilous and often semi-pornographic denigration of authority in his numerous epigrams, was called to the tsar's attention by a disgruntled patriot, the founder of the new University of Kharkov. Alexander was outraged, and Pushkin barely escaped being sent to Siberia or the Solovetsky Islands on the White Sea, infamous for the harshness of their climate. Karamzin exacted from him a pledge that he would write nothing against the government for two years, and it was only through the influence of such powerful friends at court that the tsar relented. Pushkin did not escape being sent into exile, but it was to be in the Southern Territory of Russia, assigned to the chancellery of the general in charge of Russian interests in that region.

Pushkin spent four years in the south of Russia, traveling in the Caucasus and the Crimea, gathering impressions for such poems as "The Prisoner of the Caucasus" and "The Fountain of Bakhchisaray," and setting down the first stanzas of *Eugene Onegin*. It was at this time that he began to read Byron in a French prose translation, and the Byronic influence on his work became apparent. One poem in particular written during these years later caused him as much trouble as his political poetry had done previously. Professing "a militant atheism" at this time, he mocked the general's orders that his staff attend church services ("If only Christ's blood were, let's say, Lafite ... or Clos de Vougeot"); and in "The Gabrieliad," he turned out "a blasphemous parody of the Annunciation." The beautiful Mary is impregnated not only by God but also by Satan in the guise of a handsome young man, and then by the angel Gabriel. "One, two, three" the weary Mary exclaims, "how can they keep it up?"

Pushkin himself, resentfully vegetating in this obscure outpost of the Russian Empire, amused himself as best he could with amorous adventures (including a Greek courtesan reputed to have been a mistress of Byron), with gambling and duels. He had several passionate affairs

How does Marty do it?
He's sooooo smart!
How does Marty do it?
He's very, very aggressive!

How does Marty Edelston squeeze so much Great Life information into such an itty-bitty magazine?

Just call **1-888-858-5800** and he'll send you, absolutely FREE, an introductory subscription to his amazing *BOTTOM LINE/Personal!*

Marty will send that introductory subscription to each and every ***New Republic*** subscriber — so all can live much better —

Healthier, wealthier, wiser and happier, too!

Call 1-888-858-5800...
Tell the operator you're from *The New Republic.*

How1NR 3DBL1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with more respectable ladies; one, particularly fervent, was with the Jewish wife of a shipping merchant in Odessa, and led to an outburst of poems remarkable for their fierce expressions of jealousy. Although Pushkin's service superior General Vorontsov, aware of his fame and his supporters in high places, was extremely lenient with his lapses, his patience ran out for several reasons. Pushkin—along with others, to be sure—was one of the lovers of his wife, and the poet had taken it into his head that the general had insulted him by a request that he investigate a plague of locusts in the region. The general complained about him to St. Petersburg, and his friends could do nothing: a letter in which he boasted of his atheism had come to the attention of the authorities. It was thus decided to assign Pushkin to forced residence in the family estate of Mikhailovskoe, which the Empress Elizabeth had given to Abram Gannibal in 1742.

ALEXANDER I HAS PERHAPS never received sufficient credit for his service to Russian literature in forcing Pushkin to lead a relatively isolated and tranquil country life between 1824 and 1826. "In just over two years," Binyon writes, "Pushkin completed *The Gypsies*, composed a mass of lyrics, wrote a historical drama in blank verse [*Boris Godunov*], and added nearly a hundred stanzas to *Eugene Onegin*." For company there was a cultivated family on a neighboring estate, close enough to be reached on foot; and he pays tribute to the narrow waist of one of the two daughters (with whom he had an affair two years later) in *Eugene Onegin*. Evenings were often spent in the company of Pushkin's peasant nurse, Arina Rodionovna, who regaled and amused him with folk songs and fairy tales. "How charming these tales are," he wrote in a letter. "Each is a poem."

Although critics concerned to stress Pushkin's immersion in the culture of the Russian people have emphasized the importance of such an influence, Binyon simply mentions it in passing. But he cites the lines from the poem "Winter Landscape," in which Pushkin depicts how he passed the long evenings in her company:

> Sing me a song of how the bluebird
> Peacefully lived beyond the sea;
> Sing me a song of how the maiden
> Went down for water in the morning.

But this innocent and poetically productive occupation was not his only distraction, and a visitor to Mikhailovskoe noticed among the serf girls one who was unmistakably pregnant. A poem of Pushkin's had excoriated the widespread propensity of landowners to take sexual advantage of their helpless female serfs; but no more than Tolstoy could Pushkin resist the temptation. The girl went to Moscow with her family and Pushkin asked friends there to look after her and the future infant, a boy who died a month and a half after being born. He later arranged for her freedom, and she married a nobleman whose service rank was higher than the poet's.

A good deal of Pushkin's time was taken up with attempts to escape from his rustic incarceration, and he invented an imaginary illness that required treatment in Riga or Dorpat, border cities that would allow him to flee abroad. This plan became so complicated and so farfetched that Binyon compares it "to the exploits of the Scarlet Pimpernel," and the authorities who received his petition, accompanied by a lachrymose letter from his mother, were only puzzled by the request. But Alexander I died suddenly in November 1825, and Pushkin saw in his decease a new hope of being freed by the successor to the throne.

THE DECEMBRIST REVOLT OCcurred at this time, led by officers who were either close friends or acquaintances of Pushkin. Indeed, when asked by the new tsar, Nicholas I, where he would have been on the day of the revolt if he had not been absent from St. Petersburg, he replied courageously: "I would have been in the ranks of the rebels." Moreover, many of the officers arrested and questioned referred to the influence of his work, and the effect of what one called "Mr. Pushkin's freedom poems." Perhaps this was one reason that Nicholas wished to see him in person, and ordered him brought back to the capital. The interview went very well, and when Pushkin complained about the censorship, Nicholas declared that he alone would now take over the task. But this new arrangement, which pleased Pushkin at first, turned out to be even more stifling than the old one. The tsar could not be approached directly, his word was final, and even the reading of new works to Pushkin's friends was forbidden before they were officially approved. The publication of *Boris Godunov* was delayed for a number of years because the tsar, who actually read it (those were the days!), thought it would be more suitable as "an historical tale or novel in the manner of Walter Scott."

Pushkin had thus now been placed under the personal supervision of the tsar, and though he had been assured that he was free, the secret police kept a sharp eye on all his comings and goings. Even though the tsar's interest provided some protection, and in fact the poet had now become a staunch supporter of the throne, Pushkin's reputation as a subversive continued to cause him trouble. A poem written years before had denounced the guillotining of one of his favorite French poets, André Chénier, during the French Revolution; and this was now turned in to the secret police with the added title "December 14," which was the date of the Decembrist uprising. His protest about Chénier was thus mistakenly thought to apply to recent events, which had led to the execution of five of the Decembrists; but he extricated himself easily from the charge, only being reprimanded for allowing the circulation of a manuscript not approved by the censorship. Another early work caused trouble when two serfs complained to the metropolitan of St. Petersburg that they had been corrupted because their master read to them from "The Gabrieliad." Pushkin at first rashly denied having written the sacrilegious lampoon, but when pressed in the name of the emperor, he wrote a letter to Nicholas acknowledging his guilt and asking for (and receiving) pardon for a transgression of his youth.

Pushkin now once again led the same debauched and ruinously expensive life already familiar from his past, much to the disapprobation of his friends. His patriotic ardor, though, led him to try to enlist in the Russian Army, then engaged in hostilities against both Persia and Turkey. Having been turned down, he decided to go south independently to observe the war in which his brother and numerous classmates from Tsarskoe Selo were now taking part. Six years later he used the trip to write *Journey to Erzerum*, a prose work that contains, as Binyon remarks in one of his few literary observations, battle scenes comparable to both Stendhal and Tolstoy. Pushkin also strongly supported the Russian cause in the war against its Polish provinces that broke out in 1830, and was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worried that Europe might interfere. What Binyon rightly calls his "chauvinist, imperialist" side appears in such a poem as "To the Slanderers of Russia," an answer to the chorus of Europeans reviling his homeland. It is worth noting that his friend Vyazemsky, and a group of younger writers, were highly critical of this poetic defense of a bloody suppression. Less controversial were the satirical literary polemics he engaged in over criticisms of the recently published seventh chapter of *Eugene Onegin*.

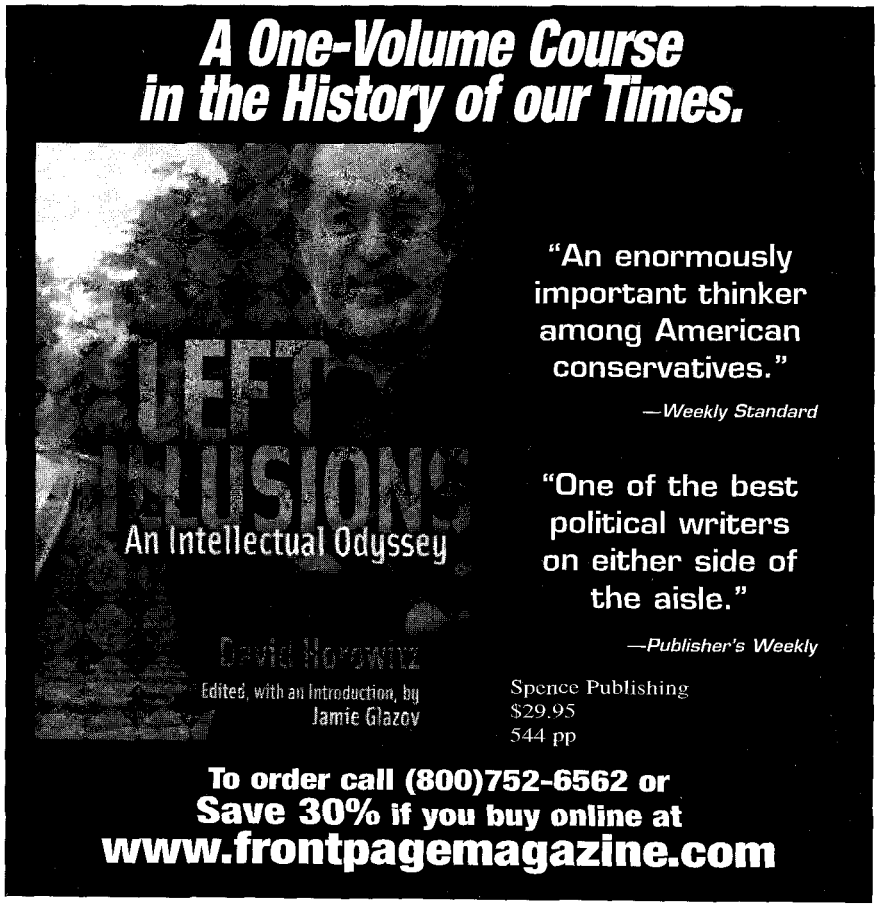
MOST OF ALL, HOWEVER, HE was now concerned to find himself a wife. He had decided to marry, for reasons that he could never explain to himself, and perhaps only because, as he wrote in chapter eight of *Eugene Onegin*, "Blest is he who, green in adolescence / At twenty was a fop or blade / At thirty a good marriage made."

At twenty-nine, Pushkin was turned down several times because the extremely affluent families of the women to whom he proposed did not think he was a suitable match. Aside from his shady reputation, great poet or not, he had no family fortune on which such a union could be based. At last he found a notably beautiful eighteen-year-old, Natalya Goncharova, whose once-wealthy family was willing to accept him. Binyon comments on the peculiarity of his letter to her mother asking for her hand—a letter that eloquently outlines all the reasons why he would not make an acceptable husband. Could he have been trying, perhaps subconsciously, to provoke a refusal, and thus "tell himself that fate did not wish him to become a married man?"

He did become one all the same, but not before a three-month burst of creativity in the solitude of a country estate recently inherited from his uncle. There he wrote all of the *Tales of Belkin*, thirty lyrics, his four *Little Tragedies* (which include *Mozart and Salieri*) and two more chapters of *Eugene Onegin*. An additional chapter, placing Eugene among the Decembrists, was burned (though Binyon fails to mention that fragments, written in a sort of code that scrambles the lines, exist in a notebook and contain what Roman Jakobson called "an openly incendiary and anti-tsarist reflection"). Three years later, retiring to the same estate from the whirligig of social life, in six weeks he wrote his marvelous *The Bronze Horseman* (in which the antinomies that continue to dominate Russian culture, pace Binyon, are expressed with incomparable mythical power), and also the superb story *The Queen of Spades*, not to mention poems and verse tales.

Married life involved considerable expense, which plunged him even more heavily into debt; and his wife, whose charms attracted the attention of the emperor (though there is no evidence of any further intimacy) adored the endless social merry-go-round. There was hardly an evening when the couple could not be found at a dinner or a ball, and this became more than a personal preference when Pushkin received a court appointment as gentleman of the chamber. Such gentlemen, usually much younger men, were required to attend all court functions, and Pushkin took the supposed honor as a kind of insult. In one poem he speaks of himself as "a tired slave," and he struggled laboriously to reconcile his literary preoccupations with his obligations as a father (he and Natalya had four children) and a husband. He nonetheless managed to turn out a history of the Pugachev uprising, the peasant revolt of the eighteenth century that shook the reign of Catherine the Great, even traveling to the locality to interview survivors. His brief but impressive novel, *The Captain's Daughter*, treats the rebels with a surprising impartiality and creates character types that set the pattern for many Russian novelists of the future. He also published a good deal of critical journalism, and continued to express his inmost feelings in lyric poetry.

Natalya was an irrepressible flirt, and many letters from her husband, sometimes lightheartedly, sometimes seriously, warn her of the dangers of this proclivity. Had not Pushkin himself portrayed in *Eugene Onegin* the terrible consequences to which it might lead? Nothing untoward occurred for several years while Natalya continued to bask in masculine admiration, and, despite rumors and gossip, it appears that she never overstepped permissible bounds. But finally she attracted the attentions of a handsome young French officer, a Royalist in exile serving with the fashionable Chevalier Guards named George d'Anthès who was also the adopted son of the Dutch ambassador to Russia, the Baron van Heeckeren. The



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relations between father and nominal son aroused a good deal of comment because, to cite one memoirist, "at that time buggery was widespread in high society." However that may be, d'Anthès conceived a violent passion for Natalya Pushkina that he displayed quite openly, and which soon also became the subject of Petersburg tittle-tattle. Although repulsing his advances she was flattered all the same, and he refused to cease his pursuit.

One day Pushkin received an insulting letter designating him as a member of the society of cuckolds (who sent this document has never been established), and he challenged d'Anthès to a duel. But his friends—as well as the baron—made desperate efforts to circumvent such an encounter, and it kept being put off. Indeed, d'Anthès even married Natalya's sister, who had always been infatuated with him, and Pushkin then withdrew his challenge. But d'Anthès still continued to pay court to Natalya in public, and even the emperor intervened to reassure the poet that he knew Natalya to be spotless (which only proved to what extent the couple had become the talk of the town). Pushkin thus found his social position more and more exasperating and untenable, and he challenged d'Anthès again. Two days later he died from his wound. His opponent left Russia, fathered four children with Ekaterina Goncharova, and ended as a senator under Louis Napoleon.

In his famous speech, Dostoevsky concluded by declaring that Pushkin, in dying young, had taken "some great secret to the grave. And so we must puzzle out this secret without him." Voices in the audience shouted that Dostoevsky himself had solved the secret, but a mountain of Russian scholarship ever since has belied this precipitous conclusion. No more than with any other great writer is there a single "secret" to be found in Pushkin's brilliantly multifarious work, but English readers interested in his complex character and incandescent life can find no more reliable place to start than T. J. Binyon's definitive book. ■

Justin Driver
Dream Weaver

HER DREAM OF DREAMS: THE RISE AND TRIUMPH OF MADAM C. J. WALKER
By Beverly Lowry
(Alfred A. Knopf, 481 pp., $27.50)

AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE something of an obsession with celebrating members of the race who are the first to achieve prominent positions and attain significant titles. These "black firsts" once merited celebration because they represented the breaking of genuine racial barriers and demonstrated that blacks could achieve even in the face of stifling oppression. When, say, Jackie Robinson became the first black major leaguer in 1947, it meant a great deal because it signaled the coming integration of American society. As barriers to African American achievement have eroded over the last forty years, however, the fixation on black firsts has paradoxically intensified rather than dissipated. Just last year, *Jet* magazine trumpeted some of the most recent inductees into the increasingly unselective club of black firsts, many of whose meager achievements do not exactly signal a blow against unrelenting racism. In January, for example, the magazine saluted "the masterminds" who founded FlirtingTime.com, the first black-owned Internet dating company. In August, *Jet* saluted Mike and Nicole Lewis, "Southwest Airlines' first and only Black father and daughter pilot team." The temptation to view nearly every endeavor as grounds for identifying a black first even prompted the magazine to label *Dynasty* "the 1980s prime-time soap where [Diahann] Carroll portrayed Dominique Deveraux, TV's first Black 'bitch.' "

So zealous is the search for black firsts that the title is sometimes applied even when it is inapposite. Although Madam C. J. Walker is widely described as the first female self-made millionaire of any race, A'Lelia Bundles revealed in her biography *On Her Own Ground* (2001) that Walker in fact fell short of the elusive seventh figure by about $400,000. Still, Walker amassed a spectacular fortune, and she is one of the few African American figures whose reputation has, after years of inattention, only grown in recent years. In 1998, she was immortalized on a postage stamp as part of the "Black Heritage" series. History seems to be gradually accepting the view espoused by the Madam C. J. Walker Company's promotional copy: "every age has its great men or women and this is true of every people. No unbiased historian can chronicle the history of the Negro without weaving the name of Madam C. J. Walker into the warp and woof of its life and institutions here in America." The dust jacket of Lowry's hagiographic book, in addition to repeating the misinformation about Walker's wealth, puffs her up as "a noted philanthropist and [a] champion of women's rights," and Lowry's text adopts a similarly adoring tone, typified by its opening sentence: "There has never been anyone like her."

There is only one problem with elevating Walker into the pantheon of African American leaders: her fame has a rather tenuous connection to black pride. Walker's money came from building a cosmetics empire whose most lucrative products (including Wonderful Hair Grower, Temple Grower, and Glossine) helped to straighten naturally curly hair. In addition, she adapted the hot-comb, lengthening the distance between the teeth, so that it would more effectively straighten the hair of black women. Rather than attempting to transform Walker into a pioneering civil rights leader or a great philanthropist (she was neither), we should be content to remember Walker for what she was: a first-rate businesswoman who sold products with a dubious but lasting legacy.

MADAM C. J. WALKER WAS born Sarah Breedlove in 1867, the child of former slaves, on a plantation in Delta, Louisiana. She died fifty-two years later in an Irvington-on-Hudson mansion that she built in the same area as the Tiffany and Rockefeller estates—an area so wealthy that that there seemed no need for racially restrictive covenants. It is, to put the matter mildly,

Justin Driver, former assistant literary editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC, *is a student at Harvard Law School.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a long way from Delta to Westchester. Walker lost her parents at seven, married at fourteen, and became a mother three years later. She endured three marriages, the last of which was to Charles Joseph Walker, who supplied knowledge of the newspaper business and the name under which Sarah would become famous. (She adopted the honorific "Madam" to borrow a bit of old-world distinction, a common designation within the cosmetics world; she added an "e" to Madam only toward the end of her life.)

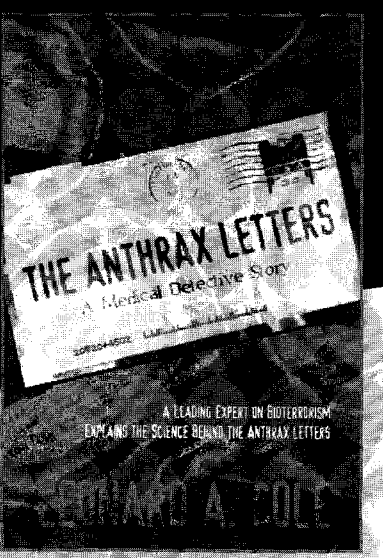
As much as anyone else, Walker created the modern cosmetics industry. Until the late nineteenth century, women who bought cosmetics purchased them from local sources. The African American cosmetics market, not surprisingly, was left largely untapped, as most blacks had precious little disposable income. In transforming the beauty industry, Walker brought a national focus (in terms of advertising, distribution, and mass production) that simultaneously retained the local touch (by crisscrossing the nation to promote her products in person, opening up Madam Walker beauty parlors, and employing thousands of door-to-door sales agents who had been trained in the Madam Walker school of beauty). Cosmetics lines directed at white consumers, such as Mary Kay and Estée Lauder, derived their sales techniques from those perfected by Walker's agents, as these companies emulated Walker's development of a line of products that won women's loyalty to her "system" of beautification.

More important than her introduction of a national focus on cosmetics sales, though, was Walker's penchant for marketing. Black newspapers received so much advertising revenue from the Walker Company that they felt compelled to run positive articles about the company's namesake—coverage that read not all that differently from advertisement copy itself. "Like a dream from the Orient," an article in the *Indianapolis Freeman* reported "or ... like a mighty effort of the imagination fired by a belief in some unseen power, swayed and urged on and on by an invisible, yet potent, force, is the life story of Madam C. J. Walker—her beginning, her struggles, and her ultimate success." In her company literature, Walker shrewdly constructed a mystical narrative to explain how she stumbled upon the Wonderful Hair Grower elixir that alleviated her own balding: "One night I had a dream, and in that dream a big black man appeared to me and told me what to mix up for my hair. Some of the remedy was grown in Africa, but I sent for it, mixed it, put it on my scalp, and in a few weeks my hair was coming in faster than it had ever fallen out. I tried it on my friends; it helped them. I made up my mind to sell it." Later Walker claimed that this dream had divine origins, saying that it was "an inspiration from God." It is a testament to the staying power of Walker's dream that nearly a century later her inane narrative sounds familiar to connoisseurs of late-night television pitches.

Walker's talent for marketing also skillfully drew upon dimensions of Horatio Alger narratives to help burnish her public image. Her standard account of her business success could come directly from the pages of *Ragged Dick*: "I began, of course, in a most modest way. I made house-to-house canvasses among people of my race, and after a while I got going pretty well, though I naturally encountered many obstacles and discouragements before I finally met with real success." In interviews, moreover, Walker never failed to mention that she started her business with just $1.25 and always emphasized the value of an honest day's work. "If I have accomplished anything in life it is because I have been willing to work hard," Walker said. "I never yet started anything doubtingly and I have always believed in keeping at things with a vim." Later in life she coined a series of aphorisms that would have caused Benjamin Franklin to swell with pride: "I got my start by giving myself a start"; "Perseverance is my motto"; "Don't sit around waiting for opportunities. You have to get up and make them."

Not content for Walker to be known exclusively for her business savvy, Walker's admirers insist on re-inventing her as a great philanthropist. Admittedly Walker was the first woman in the world to give $1,000 to a colored YMCA (a black first!) and she contributed some money to anti-lynching efforts. Yet even her philanthropic efforts have a decidedly mercenary feel, stemming less from a desire to improve the life-chances of disadvantaged blacks than to participate in

"[The Anthrax Letters] offers us a wealth of detail on the case—even as it reminds us how little we know."
–James P. Pinkerton in *Newsday*


THE ANTHRAX LETTERS
A Medical Detective Story
A LEADING EXPERT ON BIOTERRORISM
EXPLAINS THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE ANTHRAX LETTERS

THE ANTHRAX LETTERS
A Medical Detective Story
Leonard A. Cole
ISBN 0-309-08881-X
Hardback • $24.95

"Without even a hint of sensationalism, this disquieting but hopeful book skillfully zeros in on the most crucial issues and scientific advances as well as the heroic individuals who averted disaster."
—*Publishers Weekly*

To order: Call toll-free 1-888-624-7651 or browse before you buy—preview a full-text, searchable version or buy a downloadable, PDF online at **www.jhpress.org**.
From Joseph Henry Press • An imprint of The National Academies Press

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

what corporation executives today would call "business development." In one of her many letters to Booker T. Washington designed to curry favor with the black leader, Walker revealingly wrote that "[I] am in the business world not for myself alone, but to do all the good I can for the uplift of my race, which you well know by the great sacrifice I made in the interest of the YMCA of Indianapolis." Walker realized that giving large amounts of money created headlines, which in turn helped to raise her profile among African Americans and to expand the Madam Walker brand.

The current effort to extol Walker's philanthropic prowess, moreover, rests in sharp tension with the opulent lifestyle that garnered her so much attention during her lifetime. Walker had a well-known weakness for diamonds, full-length mink coats, antiques, Persian rugs, and state-of-the-art automobiles. After she bought the Westchester property, Walker boasted to a reporter that "I intend to erect on that property a home that will cost me no less than $100,000. And it is going to be very swell." To the extent that she was a race woman, Walker believed in racial uplift through purchasing power, in liberation through commodification.

Much of the retrospective emphasis on Walker's charity can be traced to a discomfort with the way in which Walker amassed her fortune. Just as emphasizing the booty-shaking videos that *Jet*'s owner Robert L. Johnson helped to proliferate on BET is somehow distasteful now that he owns a professional basketball team, so, too, would many of Walker's admirers prefer not to focus on the hair-straightening products that brought Walker her fortune. While it may be thought that embarrassment over such products arose only during the Afro'ed '60s and '70s, when Black was Beautiful, Walker's methods in fact provoked the ire of a number of her contemporaries. "What every woman who bleaches and straightens out needs, is not her appearance changed, but her mind changed," Nannie Helen Burroughs, a member of the National Association of Colored Women, wrote at the time. "If Negro women would use half the time they spend on trying to get white, to get better, the race would move forward apace." Elsewhere Burroughs called black women who straightened their hair "Negrophobes." Similarly, Marcus Garvey railed against the "Anglocizing" of black hair. No doubt Burroughs and Garvey would have been horrified to learn that, following Walker's death, her daughter A'Lelia introduced a product called Tan-Off that was designed to bleach the skin.

BEVERLY LOWRY MAKES NO apologies for the products that Walker pedaled. She argues that black women who straighten their hair do so not as an expression of self-loathing, but as a form of self-actualization. "She just wants options, to be able to fix herself up however she pleases and in the styles of her time," Lowry writes of Walker's archetypal customer. "Not simply for vanity but also for purposes of confidence and practicality, so when she walks into a room she knows and likes how she looks, and can put that one small worry aside and go on to what *is* important."

Lowry would have done well to leave the matter here. Instead she resorts to the odious politics of black authenticity in her derision of Walker's critics. "The light-skinned, educated women running the NACW have no way to comprehend the secret strengths of Sarah Walker," Lowry admonishes, "never having picked cotton, scrubbed clothes or cooked and cleaned for a living; their parents never having been inventoried like fence posts." Lowry seems to believe that being educated renders African American women somehow incapable of leveling criticism at their black sisters. She proceeds to charge that Walker's critics simply do not understand the struggles that real black women face: "these are educated light-skinned women whose experience would seem to have little in common with that of a hardworking brown-skinned woman." Although divisions among African Americans along color lines are too often ignored, labeling Walker's critics high-yellow snobs with "aquiline" noses and "soft hair" does not much help in assessing the legitimacy of their claims.

For someone who has chosen to write about cosmetics, Lowry often fails to grasp that a large part of what is deemed beautiful stems from socially constructed notions. And some of these cultural inventions devalue black features. Why, Lowry seems to wonder, is there so much ado about a 'do? According to Lowry, Walker's customers "just want their hair to look nice, and not one of them doesn't know the pain of hair wrapping or the perils of chemical treatment." But arguing that women want hair that "looks nice" does nothing to resolve the matter. Indeed, hair that "looks nice" seems to indicate that un-straightened hair is somehow unattractive. Lowry apparently subscribes to the old, cruel distinction between "good hair" and "bad hair," as when she writes about Walker's impetus to tinker with chemicals to ameliorate her balding. "She lays most of the blame on poor diet and stress," Lowry remarks, "but she was also probably experimenting with concoctions to tame her natural frizz so that she could style it however she wished." Encouraging women to "tame" their wild hair hardly seems to embrace the notion that feminine beauty comes in a variety of forms. It is a bitter irony that Lowry's push for versatility and self-actualization through physical appearance unwittingly constrains black women who wish to wear their hair un-straightened.

LOWRY'S BOOK IS ALSO MARRED by her peculiar decision to introduce herself into the biography, employing a technique that reached its nadir in Edmund Morris's *Dutch*. Although Lowry thankfully does not subject the reader to a fictional "Beverly Lowry," the intrusions distract the reader nonetheless. When writing of Walker's childhood growing up near the Mississippi River early in the narrative, for instance, Lowry notes: "It's a fantasy of mine to stand magically mid-river and hold out my arms, touching Louisiana and Arkansas, where my parents grew up, with the fingertips of one hand and, with the other, Mississippi, where I did." And this self-indulgence pales in comparison to Lowry's description of the scene that she witnessed at the county courthouse in Vicksburg, Mississippi when she was researching Walker's marital history:

> When I was there, most of the employees on that floor of the courthouse were women: old, young, thin, fat, black, white. A fellow employee had just given birth, and everybody was talking about what to buy for the baby. A very large woman was having a long telephone call with a female friend who, as became clear from the conversation on my end of the line, was complaining about a man who'd betrayed her. On a table at the end of the room were open boxes of dough-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nuts, and the large woman kept breaking off bits of stale pastry as she doled out advice.

Lowry cannot resist informing her readers that she has done her homework. She is so enamored of this technique that she deploys it again to draw attention to an Irvington-on-Hudson field trip. It is, of course, necessary for a diligent researcher to visit Walker's estate to get a sense of the grounds and the structure. What is not necessary is an elaborate account of the menu at the dinner party that Lowry attended at the mansion: "With the current owners I have sipped champagne in her front parlor while Leontyne Price sang Puccini in the background," Lowry writes. "I've chopped vegetables in her kitchen for an elegant meal, have walked through her halls and onto her fabulous veranda overlooking the Hudson and have seen the Battle Creek bath cabinet in her basement, even walked into her private stand-up shower with water jets up and down the walls." Lowry makes only the meekest effort to tie her dinner party at Walker's mansion to her nominal protagonist: "As we enjoyed the red wine, crown roast of lamb and fresh mushrooms, onions, locally grown squash and zucchini, I thought of Madame serving a meal for her Indianapolis boarders from a single pot...."

Lowry believes herself to be practicing something called "creative nonfiction." But blocking the view of her subject hardly qualifies as a variety of literary creativity. Indeed, perpetually resorting to the first-person in non-fiction writing demonstrates not the presence of creativity but its absence. Biography, when executed well, allows the reader to understand better the subject's world and places the choices that the subject makes in context. Whatever one thinks of Robert Caro's assessment of Lyndon Johnson's character, *The Path to Power* vividly captures the isolation and the desperation of the Texas hill country in the early twentieth century. Similarly, Lowry should have gone about the business of re-creating the existence of impoverished black sharecroppers in the postbellum South rather than jarringly alternating between Walker's times and her own adventures in research. Biographers would be well advised to reserve their solipsistic fantasies and their dinner party anecdotes for their interviews with Brian Lamb. ■

Robert Boyers
In Exile From Exile

THE HOOLIGAN'S RETURN: A MEMOIR
By Norman Manea
Translated by Angela Jianu
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 385 pp., $30)

"TO LEARN THAT WE HAVE said or done a foolish thing, that is nothing," wrote Montaigne. "We must learn that we are nothing but fools, a far broader and more important lesson." It is a lesson that many an autobiographer has been all too ready to embrace. In the staging of dramas in which frailty and foolishness are relentlessly depicted, the lighting tends to be very carefully arranged. The assumption informing autobiography has long been that it is at once a constructed narrative and a "truthful" engagement with a nature or a disposition more or less equally compounded of darkness and light. In the telling of life stories, it is assumed, resistances will be overcome, and there will be at least some therapeutic benefit in the uncovering of material previously suppressed, forgotten, or ignored. The opportunities for self-congratulation afforded by the construction of life stories are considerable, and rare are the memoirists who can resist them.

Exiles, whose life stories have to do with the experience of migration and loss, are perhaps more susceptible than others to the varieties of self-approval opened up by memoir-writing. Such persons have been so numerous in the last hundred years as almost to seem commonplace today. No one who reads can fail to be familiar with the works of writers who have reflected on the subject of exile, though often it is exile as a "metaphysical condition" or a noble effort to compensate for what has been "lost in translation" that is front and center, rather than exile as occasion for posturing or delusion. Joseph Brodsky recommended that the writer in exile wholeheartedly embrace "the metaphysical dimension," for "to ignore it or dodge it is to cheat yourself out of the meaning of what has happened to you ... to ossify into an uncomprehending victim." At the same time, he warned, the writer in exile, because he has suffered, usually at the hands of a political tyranny, is apt to regard himself as a "certified martyr," "unchecked by anyone," whose potential insignificance in the place to which he has emigrated can only be countered by the steady assertion of his privileged status as exemplary sufferer and witness.

Since the writer in exile will usually feel marginal in his new place of residence, he is likely, Brodsky argues, to become "a retrospective and retroactive being," ignoring, for the most part, his present reality, recycling "the familiar material of his past," and gravitating to the elegiac. The dangers here are obvious. They include what Brodsky called "the repetitiveness of nostalgia," the slowing down of the writer's "stylistic evolution," and even an insidious cynicism. "The good old stuff served him well at least once: it earned him exile. And exile, after all, is a kind of success.... Why not push the good old stuff around a bit more?"

No memoirist with whom I am familiar would seem to understand more sharply than Norman Manea the dangers anatomized by Brodsky. Again and again in *The Hooligan's Return*, Manea recoils from flattery, from sympathy, from praise. Persistently he sniffs around in his own sentences for traces of cliché, illusion, self-promotion. For every modest self-assertion there are numerous passages of caustic self-mockery. Everywhere Manea interrogates his own tendency to become what he despises: an emblem, an embodiment, a "marketable" victim-figure or avenger. He knows how seductive it is to push the good old stuff around, to collude in the cozy myth-making that trivializes suffering. No witness to the several barbarisms of the past century has so persistently instructed his reader in the process by which "Thursday's atrocities have become grist for the

Robert Boyers is Tisch Professor of Arts and Letters at Skidmore College and editor of SALMAGUNDI.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mottoes on Friday's T-shirts." Does he cultivate, now and again, what he calls "the Judaic taste for catastrophe"? Is he addicted, just a little, to the extremity that helps a man to seem interesting to himself? If so, there is also a pronounced distaste for the "whinings and jeremiads of the victim" and a sly contempt for the "fatigue of being oneself."

NORMAN MANEA WAS BORN IN a small Romanian market town in Bukovina in 1936. His father was a baker's son, his mother a bookseller's daughter. The Jews of the province, as Manea reports, "spoke Romanian as well as German, and enjoyed uninterrupted contact with the Romanian population." In the sugar factory where Manea's father worked, there also worked "Czech, German, and Italian 'foreigners' " in what had seemed an increasingly cosmopolitan community. The deportation order issued in 1941 by the Romanian fascist authorities sent the Jews of Bukovina to the Transnistria concentration camp in the Ukraine and put an end to the illusions inspired by the long experiment in cosmopolitanism.

Though several elderly members of the family interned with them in the Transnistria camp did not survive the war years, Manea and his parents emerged in 1945 and soon struggled to make a life for themselves in communist Romania. In 1949, Manea became a communist youth leader—the episodes of the memoir devoted to this period in his life are alternately hilarious and heartbreaking—but soon he went through a period of disaffection, eventually became an engineer, published several books, and by 1974, with the help of a psychiatric exemption, became a full-time writer. His eight novels and numerous other works gradually made him a significant literary voice in his country, but he also became a suspicious figure in Ceauşescu's anti-Semitic, authoritarian universe, though he was not a defiantly dissident writer nor an openly subversive anti-communist. In 1986 he left the country with his wife and two years later settled in New York City.

Manea's fiction and essays (four books are available here in English translation) clearly issue from a man who knows gentleness and affection but is too ironic and too suspicious to settle for "healing" or "closure," or to ignore the specific gravity of his own nature. *The Hooligan's Return* begins in 1997 with a visit to a landmark deli in Manhattan, where the writer discusses with his friend Philip Roth his decision to visit Romania after an absence of nine years. Like other such exchanges in a book that moves in surprising and briefly disorienting leaps and bounds from melancholy to whimsy, from the sardonic to the lyrical, the exchange with Roth is fragmentary, suggestive, playful, inconclusive. But in that opening episode of a long book we see at once the tenor and the abiding strategy of Manea's imagination, which encompasses a great many moods and events and projections. Nothing stands still for long in this narrative: back and forth and away the narrative persistently swings, so that the long journey to Transnistria in 1941 is intertwined with the repatriation journey of 1945 and the later trips to the west and back again to the homeland in 1997. In Manea, the flow of language is by turns murmurous and single-minded, remembrance and reflection, time present and time past so entirely interfused that the one seems invariably the face of the other.

There is not much of the "certified martyr" in Manea. He did, after all, survive the serial ordeals to which he was subjected, and if survival did often seem to him a dubious privilege, he did live long enough to observe the demise of fascist and communist Romania—and also to bury some of the glamorous lies associated with extra-territoriality. Like Kafka, he is "claimed ... by the dark fogs of Eastern Europe," but he is loath to appropriate the "certifiable" despair of Kafka's "I am allowed no moment of calm, I cannot take anything for granted, everything has to be fought for...." Yes, he declares, he recognizes himself in those words, though one must beware of affiliations, precisely because they are so tempting; those whose boats are leaky are preternaturally susceptible to resonantly downward-drifting accents.

MANEA'S RESISTANCE TO POSture and myth takes many forms. More often than not it arrives with an inflection, a voice, the sharp accent of a friend disinclined, in Manea's version, to let the writer get away with anything. Am I a nuisance? Manea wonders. Yes, "quite a nuisance occasionally," Roth concedes. And do I not resemble, as I have long seemed to myself, that familiar character of Augustus the Fool, "the pariah, the loser, the one who always gets kicked in the ass, to the audience's delight"? Sorry, another friend replies, but you are, poor thing, a "respectable" writer in residence, "honored with prizes and an endowed chair ... In the East European circus, the clown returning from America is a victor, a star." The friend is tolerant, amused. He laughs at the writer's penchant for self-dramatization and certifiable martyrdom. Try as he may, Manea cannot successfully make himself into the figure for whom he would like to mobilize a dreary, all-purpose compassion.

To be worthy not merely of compassion but of admiration, Manea believes, the exile needs to see himself not as a victim merely but as one who struggled, a man never complacent in defeat but moved always to say no, I will not go gently, I will not speak that lie, I will not settle into the empty rituals of solidarity. To this end, he applies to himself—a modest, tentative, sheepish man—the epithet "hooligan," which has a notable pedigree in twentieth-century Romanian history. Manea tells us that in Mihail Sebastian's book, *How I Became a Hooligan*, which appeared in 1935, Sebastian affirmed the "'spiritual autonomy' of Jewish suffering, its 'tragic nerve,' the dispute between a 'tumultuous sensibility' and a 'merciless critical spirit,' between 'intelligence at its coolest and passion at its most unbridled.' A hooligan? Did that mean marginal, nonaligned, excluded.... He defined himself clearly: 'I am not a partisan, I am always a dissident....' What does being a dissident mean? Someone dissenting even from dissidents?"

But it was not only the Jew Sebastian who staked a claim to the word "hooligan." The young Mircea Eliade, later famous for his scholarly books on the history of religion and a distinguished professor for many years at the University of Chicago, published an early novel entitled *The Hooligans*. There hooliganism was associated with "rebellion unto death ... perfectly and evenly aligned regiments within a collective myth." This was a hooliganism rather far removed from the "merciless critical spirit" and "cool autonomy" extolled as indispensable components of hooliganism by Sebastian. In fact, at the time he wrote his novel, Eliade was a spokesman for the fascist Iron Guard, eagerly awaiting, as he wrote in 1938, "a nationalist Romania, frenzied and chauvinistic, armed and vigorous, ruthless and vengeful," and prepared to address "the advance of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

... Jews [who] have overrun the villages...." Such observations seem to Manea "ridiculous and disgusting," and the powerful essay on Eliade that he wrote for *The New Republic* in 1991 won for him in post-communist Romania epithets ranging from "dwarf of Jerusalem" to "half-man" and "louse."

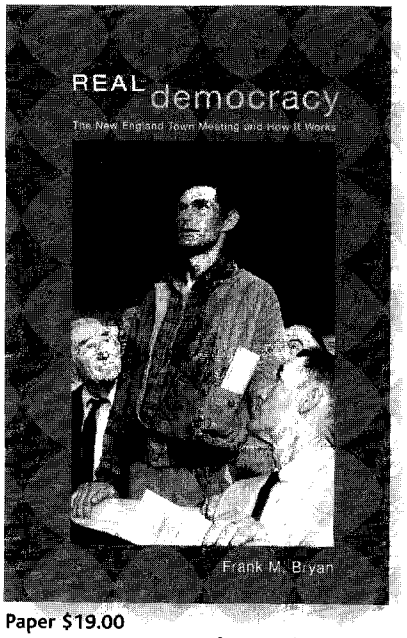
The word "hooligan" has in our language a somewhat archaic ring, in part because it has often been applied with tender affection to naughty children whose transgressions, however habitual, seem to their parents eminently forgivable. Just so, when Manea applies the word to himself, he does so with the sense that he is the most improbable of hooligans, a man ordinarily too mild and dreamy to represent a genuine danger to the body politic. To read Manea's stories is often to find oneself in a dreamy domain of Proustian inwardness. To be sure, Manea's fiction also encompasses political satire and farce, and his essays often pursue their targets with unremitting urgency. Still, as one critic has noted, Manea most often prefers "the horror of the indescribable to the description of horror," and "the uncanny atmosphere of unreality," along with the proliferating "coded paradoxes" of his fiction make him seem anything but a typical polemicist.

STILL, THERE IS IN MANEA'S REPERTOIRE a considerable gift for authentic hooliganism. He is a compulsive debunker. He leaves behind him, all through the memoir, a trail of discarded postures and postulates. Manea clearly fears the contamination of "critical" hooliganism by a species of glib appropriation captured by several leading Eastern European writers. In Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*—to cite a notable example—the character Sabina leaves Prague for the West in 1968, and discovers in the catalogue for an exhibition of her paintings "a picture of herself with a drawing of barbed wire superimposed on it. Inside she found a biography that read like the life of a saint or martyr: she had suffered, struggled against ... injustice, been forced to abandon her bleeding homeland, yet was carrying on the struggle." When Sabina protests to friends that "my enemy is Kitsch, not Communism," she is not understood. Manea would never agree that his enemy in Romania had been "Kitsch, not Communism," but he does surely understand Sabina. His determination not to make himself into a dissident noble rider is drawn from the same loathing of falsehood that inspires Kundera's character. To be a hooligan, that is, an oppositional figure who sees through every mask, appeals to Manea so long as it does not entail the pretense of perfect virtue.

This reluctance in Manea goes beyond the customary acknowledgment that heroes are likely to have clay feet. He is wary not merely of ordinary frailty but also of self-deception. And he loathes puerility, which is the "everyday somnambulism" of the hear-no-evil-see-no-evil fellow travelers of every established order. That puerility is perfectly expressed in the title of Manea's *Compulsory Happiness*, which is set in the "penal colony" of "the big lie"; there, in Ceauşescu's Romania, citizens "can continue sucking on their dumb lollipop of hope" and deny to themselves what is obvious about the lives they lead. In his memoir, Paradise is the name Manea gives to the great good "daily" place most well-adjusted ciphers agree to be happy in. The memoir opens with the words, "The bright spring light, like an emanation from Paradise, streams through the large picture window wide as the room itself." By the end of the paragraph, "looking down from his tenth-floor apartment" at the New York City street below, he must remind himself again that "In Paradise ... one is better off than anywhere else." Later, strolling casually past Verdi Square, he notes that "the placid pigeons of Paradise have come to rest" on the presiding statue of the Italian composer.

Everywhere Manea confronts the trivial, familiar, comforting surfaces of ordinary life that tempt him to agree that things could be worse and that only fools long for a "better" or a "best" that will never materialize. Everywhere he notes the propensity to shallowness and accommodation. Try though he may to be grateful for the air-conditioned Paradise of the United States, he cannot summon "the joy of liberation." Moved occasionally to register with due compassion the plight of ordinary persons, all, like himself, unable to be other than they are, he reminds himself that the "oppressed masses" are "the not-so-innocent," and that "elementary polarities"—as between

REAL democracy



The New England Town Meeting and How It Works

Frank M. Bryan

"I wish I had written this book. It is witty (about Vermont village life) and wise (about everything from Athenian democracy to the ecological fallacy). It deals with a phenomenon that deserves attention from every American concerned about the future of our polity. Town meetings are hardly the primary solution to what ails our democracy, but understanding how they work could help us design reforms on a larger canvas. Too few books are both fun and important, but this one is."—Robert D. Putnam, Harvard University

Paper $19.00

The University of Chicago Press

1427 East 60th Street • Chicago, IL 60637
www.press.uchicago.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

east and west, free and unfree, open and closed—"often prove to be in fact complementary." So Manea speculated in *On Clowns,* and so he would seem still to believe in his latest report from Paradise.

FOR MANEA, WHAT HAS ALWAYS seemed problematic is the very concept of normality. Normality suggests, after all, that human beings can live their lives without undue recourse to fantasy and exaggeration, with some reasonable expectation that the world will be more or less regular in its rhythms and unfoldings. This sense of things Manea struggles to achieve, though he does so, for the most part, without hope. In Romania, he reports, almost anyone would likely have been invited to serve the government as an informer. A close friend of Manea had been chosen to inform on the writer, and did so for several years, meeting each week in "safe" private houses to deliver meaningless information to a Securitate policeman, later casually reporting to his friend Norman on these "official visits." Such an arrangement was routine in a country where there was "one fully employed police officer for every fifteen citizens," as Manea wrote in *On Clowns*, "and for every police officer, fifteen 'volunteer' informers." But can such an arrangement be, or seem, normal?

But the question of normality cuts in other directions as well. Early in the memoir, Manea reads on a yellow New York City building façade, "spelled out in iridescent blue," the words: "DEPRESSION IS A FLAW IN CHEMISTRY NOT IN CHARACTER." Like so much that passes through Manea's mind, the words seem at once preposterous and cautionary, a curiosity and a portent of larger things. Ever alert to flaws, skeptical about therapies and adjustments, suspicious of formulas designed to make people feel good about themselves, Manea routinely recoils from anything soothing or categorically guilt-reducing. Scarred by the "toxins" he has long ingested, he betrays in the memoir his long habit of handling what passes for normality with acidic, ironic distortion. Tempted though he may be to earnestness, solemnity, uncomplicated fellow feeling, he checks himself, remembers the advice of Gombrowicz, who "used to relish sticking out his tongue at himself in an ever-present mirror."

That Manea has no prospect of establishing a "normal," untroubled relationship with any conceivable idea of normality is clear to us from the first pages of the memoir. Even his happy memories are delivered with a compulsive air of ironic distortion. Bucharest itself, a place where Manea once experienced varieties of carnal adventure and other intensities, is remembered as a "Gomorrah." Ordinary events and emotions are transformed into dramatic counters in an ongoing struggle, so that a "normal" sense of the thing unfolding before us has no chance against a diction replete with "revenge," "redemption," "masters of the night," "the ghetto's eternal fear," "the Christian siren," "the honey trap of defilement, the taboo, temptation."

The distortion and the irony that are essential aspects of Manea's imagination are sometimes directed at ephemeral things such as love affairs, and sometimes at more terrifying events. "Transnistria did not live up to expectations," he writes, "and could only show a balance sheet of fifty percent dead." The irony in that sentence is best appreciated when the sentence is placed next to a passage on the preceding page of the memoir: "From across the millennia,a tragic destiny has united the Babylonian captivity with the inferno of starvation, disease, and death in Transnistria." So wrote the Christian mayor of Czernowitz, a man named Traian Popovici, who had tried, until the very last moment, to halt the deportation of Jews. So the irony here, though Manea does not declare it to be one, is that Popovici too "did not live up to expectations," that is, did not behave as a "Christian" official would have been expected to behave in Czernowitz in 1941. Popovici's language, marked as it is by an inflationary rhetoric ("across the millennia," "a tragic destiny," "Babylonian captivity," "inferno of starvation"), is by no means excessive here—it expresses in fact the "normal," that is, the highly charged, fully informed, deeply felt response of a "normal" person to a catastrophe that most "normal" "Christian" persons in Czernowitz could not have grasped in anything remotely like a "normal" way.

Assaulted by versions of orchestrated unreality and by monstrous deformations of public rhetoric, Manea often doubts his own capacity to maintain "coherence" and "wholeness." He wants to be free of illusion, to renounce all misleading affiliations, yet he needs a place to stand, however much he mistrusts places and cannot long stand still. Is he a Jew? He is a non-believing Jew; he belongs to what Jean-François Lyotard once called a "non-people of survivors" whose "sense of communion" depends upon "an endless recalling of things past." But Manea catches at this definition like a man who trusts nothing, least of all a key to identity so seductive and so empty as to connect the communicant to a "non-people." His Jewishness is a fact, but it does not seem to him an adequate place to stand.

Throughout the memoir Manea turns to many sources in his search for coherence. His mind "fills with quotations, as if only the rhetorical hysteria of other people's words could release [him] from [him]self" and, we might add, effectively deliver him in the end to himself. Manea is haunted, if not often by "actual" ghosts, then by bits and pieces of monologues, dialogues, passages of half-remembered books, vagrant quips and aperçus. "Wasn't it Maurice Blanchot who said that?" he wonders, or "I might as well have thought of Prague and of Milena Jesenska, yes, Kafka's Milena," or "'You are not Cioran,' I tell myself." Identity-making for Manea is all about "the verbal collages" that he is forever composing, shaping and unshaping and re-shaping as he goes, acutely sensitive to every least exaction of language and mood in each fragment he snatches at, tempted but never completely taken by the ingratiations of sentiment.

There is no single figure about whom Manea can say, as Elias Canetti could say of Karl Kraus, that he was "one of my idols," but neither does the insatiably appropriative Manea allow any one source to drive out the others. Manea's passions are so much in flux, his enthusiasms typically so provisional that he is never entirely disappointed with those he appropriates. Where Canetti writes of his need "to liberate" himself from his enthusiasms, Manea's collage-building is an ongoing progress in which no one influence or voice can long seem attractive without the countervailing force exerted by other, often contradictory, voices.

Ulysses
Vintage book reviews from the pages of The New Republic.
Only at www.tnr.com/indexarts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Canetti identifies in Kraus "his truly Biblical quality: his *horror*," and though Manea is without Kraus's other qualities of "arrogance" and "veneration for his gods," he has, surely, in abundance that "Biblical quality," that capacity for registering horror that few other writers have so powerfully conveyed. In Manea, the horror has often to do with his sense that language lies. What seems truest to him is a language far removed both from the "daily communal language" and from "literary" language. Though his mother was not, in any ordinary sense of the term, an eloquent person, she does seem now and then to Manea to speak truthfully in what he once calls "the language of the ghetto." This is a language "moaning, murmuring, demanding, living, surviving." He hears it in the nighttime rambles of the mother, elderly, diminished, in the hospital for an eye operation, hears it in her "coded laments, incomprehensible requests," in part incomprehensible because spoken in Yiddish, in words "alien" to Manea's wife, who lies beside the old woman in her narrow bed. Night after night she hears "first a murmur, like water, short guttural signals, followed by an agitated, secret confession, an arcane lexicon, wailing and reproaches, lyrical, tender refrains, meant for the ears of initiates only," mixed dialects, "Slavic and Spanish inflections, biblical sonorities, oozing forth like some linguistic alluvial mud, carrying with it all the debris gathered along the way ... her monologue is punctuated by spasmodic sounds that could be laughter or pain, one cannot tell." Characteristically rich in color and sonority, the passage enacts within the texture of its language the drama of Manea's struggle towards truthfulness and coherence. In her way, the blind mother produces a true utterance, "oozing forth," as Manea writes, and "carrying with it" everything she has "gathered," in which the intermingling of "laughter or pain," the "wailing" and the "lyrical," the "agitated" and "tender," bespeak some indisputable authenticity of feeling that no true writer would fail to envy.

For all of Manea's enormous learning and wit, his political sophistication and ironic cunning, he seems in the memoir never to let the mother's voice move very far out of reach. For the horror quietly conveyed so often in the memoir has much to do with Manea's fear that the figures who have meant most to him are now receding, the places and conditions that made them real to themselves irrecoverable. Neither can Manea reverse the more general process of corruption, the trivialization of suffering and the reduction of experience to a free-for-all in which, as Manea writes, "Everything [is] compatible with everything else." One version of that free-for-all is the process by which the exile efficiently adapts and learns to live comfortably with the loss of the world, the persons, and the meanings that alone can furnish the ground of his coherence.

Manea writes as if his rightful place on earth had not yet been discovered, as if his true place were anywhere, but somewhere else. He looks back with longing not to a place, but to a sense of place. *This* is what was forever denied him. That is why he understands so well his mother's fondness for the cemetery, beyond anything she felt for the synagogue: "It was a form of natural, unmediated, but also transcendental, communication, a way of inserting herself into history ... the past and the present ... fused. We come out of Egypt every year as they did, without ever leaving it behind altogether, we relive other Egypts again and again, their fate is ours, just as our fate is theirs, forever and ever." This, Manea says, is "a mystical connection" to the past, and it is not at all to be confused with the simple longing to be back in the familiar rooms and streets of one's place of origin that so afflicts many exiles.

If Manea is a kind of hooligan, it is because he does not trust himself to be what the world wishes him to be: neither an exemplary little prince nor a grateful survivor, neither a principled activist nor a modest citizen. The irony on display in Manea's memoir is so corrosive because it respects no boundaries, is slyly subversive no matter in which direction it is aimed, and holds itself to be almost without exception too little and often too late. Though Manea permits himself more than occasional expressions of vulnerability and affection, though he seems to us at moments companionable and tender, he is always on his guard, alert to the dreaded possibility that he will slip into the posture ridiculed by Brodsky, of the "certified martyr" or the ineffectual "retrospective and retroactive being."

This memoir—a genuinely great book, an entire teeming life seized and made permanent—is the record of a long, as yet unfinished apprenticeship in hooliganism. For he would learn, this Manea, what it is and how it is to be, with all one's heart, what he can only with misgiving claim for himself. Not a hooligan, exactly, but one who might well be taken for one, a hooligan in waiting, perhaps, or a would-be hooligan, attempting to have things more ways than one, and in the process satisfying no one, least of all himself, for whom "failure is what legitimizes you," and doubleness.

To which the alternative is ... what? The prospect that he might in fact achieve what is projected is not easy for such a man to embrace. Manea's apprenticeship is mainly good for making the prospect of a heroic hooliganism seem ever more improbable. The would-be hooligan hopefully calls up one or another of the moments when something he wrote or an interview he gave created a scandal, made him a palpable enemy of the people, only in turn to be mocked by his own wicked intelligence, or by a friend: "There's a tank division general inside you struggling to get out, you know," one friend says, and "Your liberals are acclaiming your liberal courage." Elsewhere another friend-in-Manea's-head smiles at him: "You, a hooligan? That is sheer imposture, borrowed armor." To which the apprentice can only wryly accede. For the truth of his own doubleness, of his incurable multiplicity, of the integrity of his bemused, ironic, incorrigible estrangement and self-estrangement, he cannot, must not, will not, contradict. ■

Storm Lines

The storm has the lane rippling and smoking.
The sky has come apart, scuds by in pieces.
Telephone wires belly between their poles.
In the distance a hill, in its lee must be the river
shivering in these winds, the fields of ripped hay.
In the refuge of a dazzling phone box
I dial an old number down the cracking lines.
Operator, put me through. *We have no record.*
But the house must still be there, and the fields
swarmed by winds, the trees bent double. The sky
warps and sings like a saw. This must be the way.

HENRY SHUKMAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CAMBRIDGE DIARIST

Tremors

In ancient Greece, people thought they could appease Poseidon, the god of earthquakes. But no one in contemporary Iran can truly believe that a sacrifice or prayer can rid the country of its curse of earthly convulsions. Like the typhoons that afflict Bangladesh, the tremors that frequently visit Persia seem a hex of nature. Still, when a quake occurs, such as the one that leveled the city of Bam last month, what is needed is immediate rescue and reconstruction.

The country closest to Iran with the greatest expertise in such reconstruction is Israel. It is also the country that the Tehran theocrats announced, before anybody had been saved from the ravenous earth, would not be permitted to participate in the work of retrieval and recovery. You might dismiss this as just another expression of Iran's boycott of what Tehran labels "the Zionist regime." But the irony is that Israel has, on at least three occasions, provided Iran with substantial post-earthquake relief. In fact, an old friend of mine, a veteran Zionist named Arie Eliav, known as Lova to all, ran the Israeli relief operation after the cataclysmic Iranian quake of September 1962 leveled Qazvin, a cluster of perhaps 200 tiny villages. Roughly 12,000 people perished. But, because Moshe Dayan, then minister of agriculture, quickly dispatched Lova and a team of Israeli medics, construction workers, and hydrologic engineers, many lives were saved. The Israelis also organized massive transit camps for the displaced. Soon, teams of Americans, Germans, and Japanese arrived. But Lova and other Israeli professionals stayed in Iran for two years, rebuilding reliable and safe water and power supplies and up-to-date concrete housing. (This was no small thing: Had the houses in Bam been built from something other than mud, the latest quake would not have left such ruin.) "We Israelis and the Iranian soldiers with us lived and worked like on a kibbutz," Lova told me this week. Now, however, I notice in the newspapers that, there being no more living souls to dig out from the mud, the Iranians have refused the Bush administration's offer of further help.

The Israelis did similar reconstruction work two other times in Iran: at Lar, subsequent to the earthquake of April 1960; and in Khurasan Province, in the aftermath of the August 1968 quake. They also contributed high-quality assistance after the Turkish earthquake in August 1999. Israel, alas, has been forced into this vocation by its own fate. Disasters strike Israel regularly—disasters wrought by human beings, not nature. So Israeli soldiers and civilians have gained a certain competence in the proximity of death. That is why, as soon as the news was out about the U.S. embassy bombings in Africa in 1998, Israeli rescue and intelligence teams were on their way to Nairobi. Even now, after being rejected by the Iranian mullahs, Israeli aid workers have funneled medical supplies, food, and clothing through third parties to the needy in Bam.

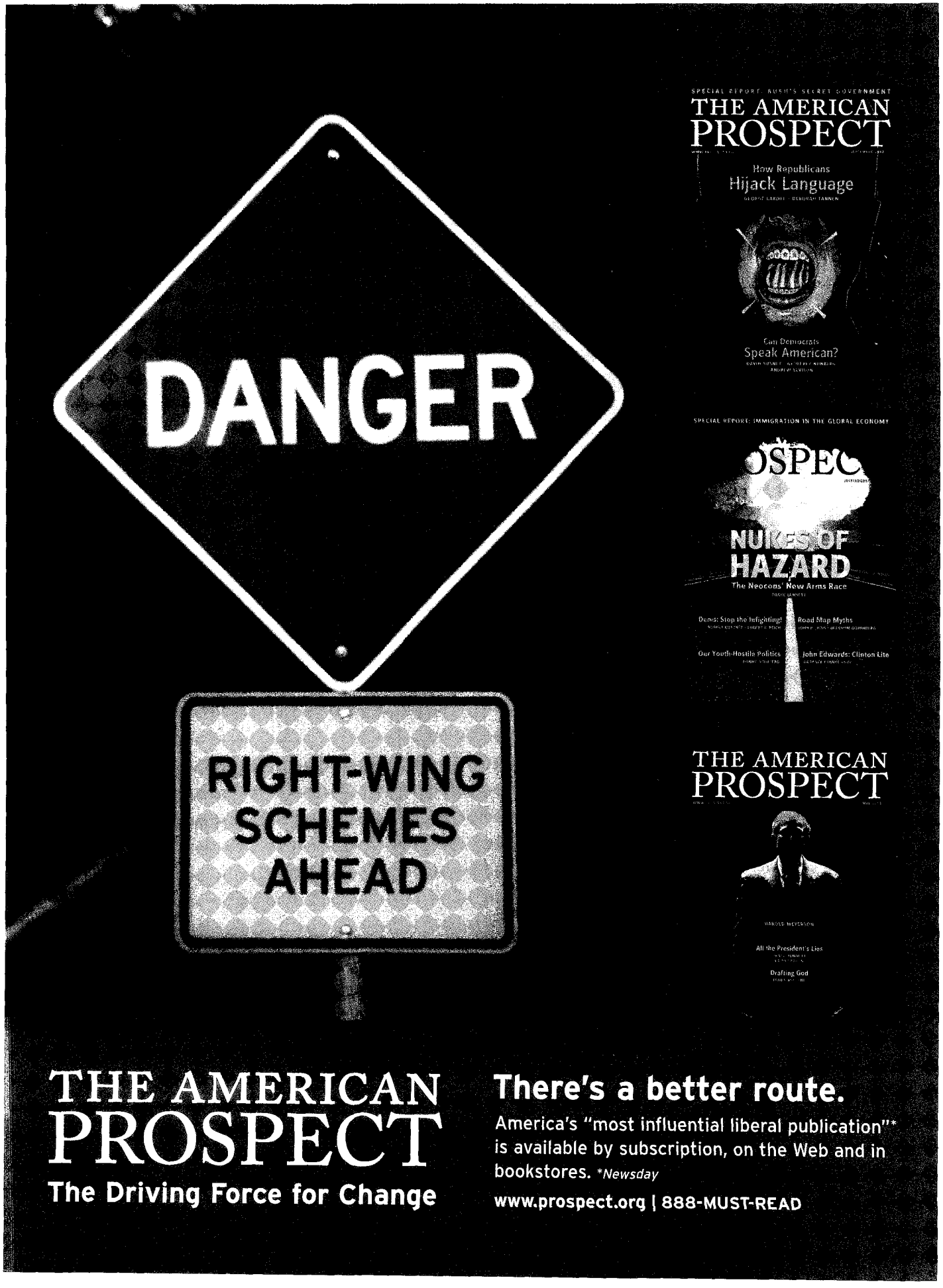
Allowing the Israelis into Bam would have been more effective than forcing them to send supplies through others, of course. An Israeli relief team would have included a core of Farsi speakers, improving communication between helpers and helped, because thousands of Iranian Jewish escapees from Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini came to Israel. There was also an earlier Persian migration to Israel: Israel's current president and its minister of defense were born in Iran. Indeed, the ties between the two countries, ruptured for a quarter-century, are existential. However reckless Tehran's current policy toward Israel—support for the Lebanese terrorist group Hezbollah, as well as nuclear bravura—it has never really had much interest in Palestine. And much of Iran still has warm feelings toward Israel, not least because the ruling Tehran mullahs so despise it. In Iran, millions listen to the Farsi-language Israel Radio. It is to them what the Voice of America was to Eastern Europeans. Israel (and, of course, the United States) had close ties to the Shah, and the Shah's reign evokes nostalgia even for Iranians who barely remember it or never knew it at all.

The rule of the Pahlavis was, of course, quite harsh. But it was positively progressive compared with those who have governed in Tehran since 1979. The treatment of women was one huge difference. The constitutional limits on Islamic clerics were another. A decent economy and productive middle class was yet another. Nonetheless, I remember human rights advocates welcoming the ayatollah's arrival from his exile in Paris when sanctimonious Jimmy Carter and lifeless Warren Christopher lost their nerve and allowed a tolerable ally to fall to an angry mob. A new democratic revolution was in the offing in Iran, we were told by high-minded American liberals who, with great certainty, had welcomed tyrants before. Remember I.F. Stone? Here he was in full delusion: "[The Iranian revolution] was a victory to thrill a democrat's heart." But Stone's heart, nobody ever seems to remember, was also thrilled by Joseph Stalin. And what about Andrew Young, Carter's U.N. ambassador? "I would be willing to bet that, in another year or so, ... Khomeini will be [seen as] some kind of saint when we finally get over the panic of what is happening there," Young said at the time.

Today, the Tehran regime is threatened not by Israel and the West but by its own economic dogmatism, incompetence, clerical tyranny, furious pursuit of nuclear weapons, and—most of all—by its own young people. Right now, as a corollary of the U.S. war on Saddam Hussein, Iran has obliquely signaled that its atomic adventures just might be curbed. And Colin Powell, who speaks for the small but insistent *tout va bien* crowd in the administration, seems to be taking the ayatollahs at their word. But how can he take them at their word? They have broken all their promises—to create freedom and prosperity for their own suffering people. Rulers who will not hear the cries of their own desperate people and who deny them succor—now in Bam, tomorrow in some other place—are not reasonable men. And we should have known that long ago.

MARTIN PERETZ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


DANGER
RIGHT-WING SCHEMES AHEAD
SPECIAL REPORT: BUSH'S SECRET GOVERNMENT
THE AMERICAN PROSPECT
How Republicans Hijack Language
Can Democrats Speak American?
SPECIAL REPORT: IMMIGRATION IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
NUKES OF HAZARD
The Neocons' New Arms Race
Dems: Stop the Infighting!
Road Map Myths
Our Youth-Hostile Politics
John Edwards: Clinton Lite
THE AMERICAN PROSPECT
All the President's Lies
Drafting God
THE AMERICAN PROSPECT
The Driving Force for Change
There's a better route.
America's "most influential liberal publication"* is available by subscription, on the Web and in bookstores. *Newsday
www.prospect.org | 888-MUST-READ

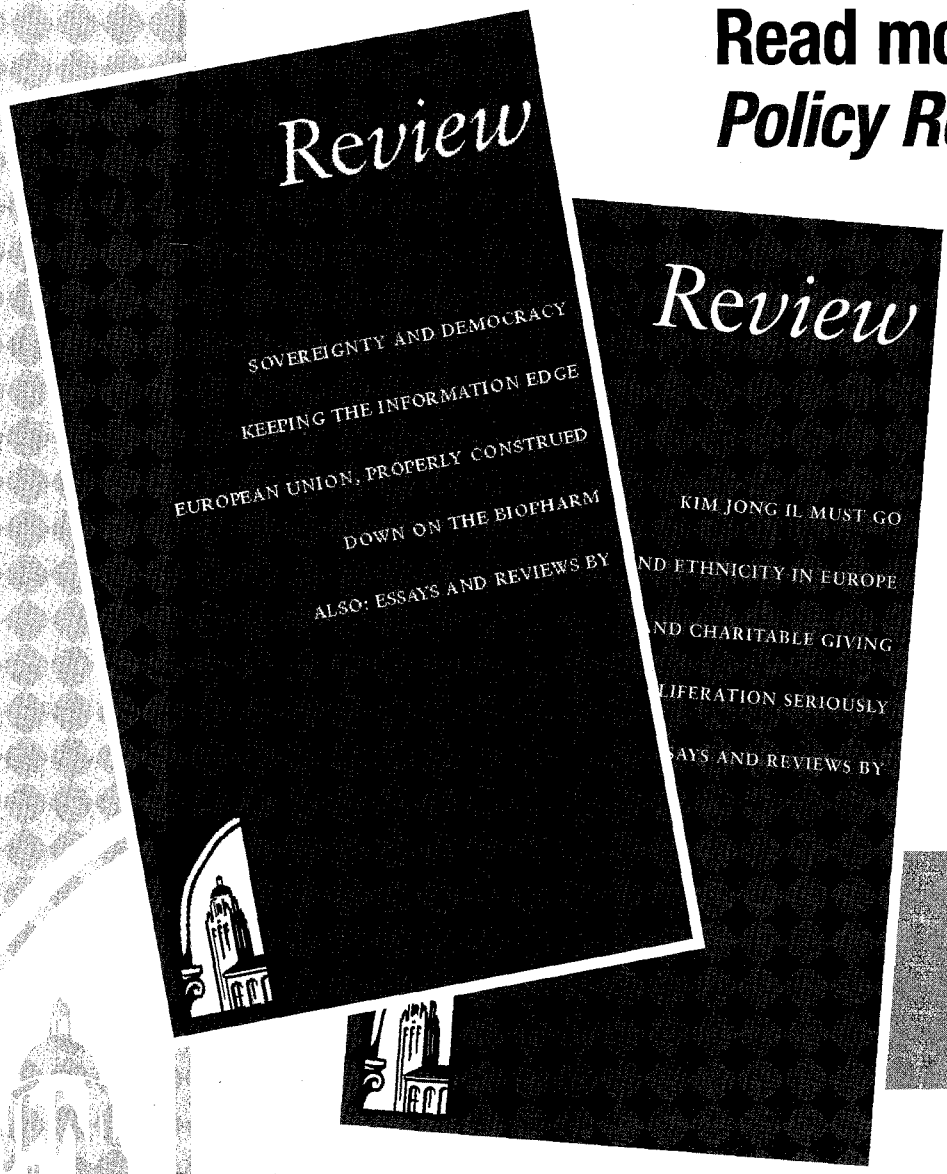
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Transcending the Nation-State?

Intelligence Failure?

Do Americans Understand Europe?

Read more in *Policy Review*



IN THIS ISSUE

Reginald Dale
David Longtin
Henry I. Miller
Sam Munson
Kevin O'Connell
Marc F. Plattner
Alvin Rabushka
Peter Savodnik
Stephanie Segall
Robert R. Tomes

FREE ISSUE!
For a complimentary copy of the latest ***Policy Review***, call
877.558.3727

Hoover Institution...*ideas defining a free society*
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, Stanford, California 94305-6010

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED